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Andrew Lang Edition

Castle Dangerous

Chronicles of the Canongate

The Two Drovers. The Highland Widow. My Aunt Margaret's Mirror. The Tapestried Chamber. Death of the Laird's Jock.

By Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

With Introductory Essay and Notes
by Andrew Lang Illustrated

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CASTLE DANGEROUS.

Andrew Lang Edition.

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AND
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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

TO

CASTLE DANGEROUS.

To criticise "Castle Dangerous" is useless, and would be impious.

> Was never wight so stoutly made
> But Time and years will overthrow,

as Major Bellenden sings. Not many words will suffice to tell, after Lockhart, the story of this unfortunate romance. Scott, before he began the tale, had suffered one paralytic shock after another. The insults to which he was subjected by the rabble at elections had aggravated his maladies. A "surgical experiment" was making him feel "like the Indian at the torture-stake." In June 1831 Lockhart went to London, on business, and, returning, found that Scott "had been gradually amending." But a morbid activity forbade him to give his brain any repose. He must write, or go mad. He began "Castle Dangerous," based on facts already recorded in his "Essay on Chivalry," in May or June, and finished it before the end of August. With Ballantyne he had broken — James, too, did "appropinque an end," their tempers and ideas clashed, and Scott, while telling Cadell about the new work, said nothing to his old ally. Ballantyne's criticisms on "Count Robert" had been such as he could not face again. He even thought of giving the book to another printer, but this severity was too much for his genial nature. He feared that he might have forgotten the scenery which he was to describe, and, on July 18, set out with Lockhart for Lanarkshire. They went up

Tweed, past Yair, Ashestiel, and Traquair, the beautiful familiar places, dull in a sultry day, broken by thunder. The lightning, which he called "bonny, bonny" when a child, excited him. When they came within view of the dark red lowering walls of Drochel Castle, an unfinished strength of the Regent Morton, Scott could hardly be prevented from stopping the carriage and walking to the place. They pushed on to Biggar, however, where the people turned out and welcomed Sir Walter. "It was the first time I ever saw him otherwise than annoyed on such an occasion." He seemed, to Lockhart, to be uneasy about his mental condition, setting tasks to his memory. He met two discharged soldiers, or men who called themselves soldiers, and they blessed him by name. He was touched, and quoted a long passage from Prior: —

> And he who played the harlequin,
> After the jest still loads the scene,
> Unwilling to retire, though weary.

On the following day they visited Castle Dangerous, and the Douglas monuments in the deserted church. There lies the effigy, cross-legged as a Crusader, of the Black Douglas, the friend of Bruce. A little crowd gathered, among them a man who remembered the Butcher Cumberland. Lockhart praises the description of the landscape in the novel, and indeed the scene might awaken Scott's smouldering fire, for he was shown the silver case that once held the chivalrous heart of the good Lord James — the heart blazoned on the Douglas shield. Of the castle, only an ivy-clad fragment remained. On their homeward way he repeated much of Wintoun, Blind Harry, Barbour, and nearly all of Dunbar's poems on the "Deaths of the Makers." Lockhart saw him in the sensitive mood which he once confesses, but ever concealed, when the

brook or the breeze brought tears to his eyes. He quoted the ballad of Otterbourne —

My wound is deep, I fain would sleep.

The passion of his life, the love of times gone by, the glory of old houses and "fights fought long ago" came upon him. At Milton Lockhart they met Lockhart of Borthwickbrae, an old friend, now smitten by the same malady as Scott himself. "Each saw his own case glassed in the other's, and neither of their manly hearts could well contain itself as they embraced." Next morning they heard that Borthwickbrae had suffered another stroke, and Scott at once set out for home. "I must home to work while it is called to-day: for the night cometh when no man can work." So they returned, and the next three weeks were spent on his last published novel. He was to winter abroad, and, the story done, he enjoyed a kind of holiday at last, in his own valley. They would dine under the great tree at Chiefswood, they visited Ettrick and Bemerside, and he entertained a son of Burns, and Wordsworth. On Sept. 23 he set out for London and the South. On his tour he wrote the unpublished novel "The Siege of Malta." His work was not done, but his work for the world's eye was completed. No task remained for him, save the last pages of his Journal, and the introduction to "Castle Dangerous," which he sent from Naples, true to the last call of duty. He also, as has been said, wrote "The Siege of Malta." A draft of the manuscript remains, and one who has read it remarks that it is not destitute of fine passages.

On Jan. 26, 1832, Scott notes, in his Journal, that he has good news from Cadell. "'Castle Dangerous' and 'Count Robert,' neither of whom I deemed seaworthy, have performed two voyages — that is, each sold about 3400 . . . as yet my spell holds fast."

Yet he "thinks the public mad for passing these two volumes," and calculates what he has "on the stocks." "Lady Louisa Stuart" he reckons at £500, probably referring to the unfinished "Private Letters" begun before "Nigel." He was, apparently, under the misconception that this old work was finished, whereas only seventy pages were in type, and it does not seem that he had the rest in manuscript. "The *Knights* of Malta" (*sic*) he estimated at £2500, and put down as much for "Reliquiæ Trotcosianæ," the description of his library and collection of antiquities which he had only begun. He had also conceived a book on the origin of *Märchen*, or popular tales, an account of his Tour, and a book for the Roxburghe Club, a labour of love. The old man in him was unaltered: he dreamed again of buying Faldonside. In fact, illusions were creeping round that noble intellect. His touching hope that his "powers of mind were not to have a different date from those of his body" was not wholly fulfilled. In almost the last lines of poetry which came from his pen, the motto of chap. xiv. of "Castle Dangerous," he says

> But he that creeps from cradle on to grave,
> Unskilled save in the velvet course of fortune,
> Hath missed the discipline of noble hearts.

He did not miss the discipline, and his Journal remains, a splendid example of constancy and fortitude under every form of trial. Among Sir Walter's lavish gifts to men, the most glorious is his example.

Of "Castle Dangerous" it would be impious to speak as if it represented his genius. That declared itself in his emotion as witnessed by Lockhart, but its broken message he could no longer translate into words, or transform into art. Nor is it a grateful task to consider the tale pathologically, to remark on the strange

blending of associations which makes him represent his minstrel as a bibliophile and antiquary, and on the weakness shown by such visions as the Knight of the Sepulchre, the burning of the coffins, the one-eyed Ursula. These things were inevitable, pyschologically, in the condition of his brain. He is more like himself in his last hunting-scene, and his account of the keen hunting-passion of the peasants. His intellect, clear and humorous to the last page of his Journal, could no longer grapple with the task of creation. Human respect forbids us to linger over the dying effort made in "Castle Dangerous."

Merely by way of being complete, something may be said here about a curious imposture, the so-called posthumous romance of "Moredun." A Monsieur E. de Saint-Maurice Cabany told, in 1855, the following tale. He knew a German merchant who bequeathed to him a desk, in which was a collection of Royalist tracts, and a manuscript called "Moredun, a Tale of the 1210." Accompanying the manuscript was a letter (given in fac-simile) addressed to "My dear W. S." (Paris, 4th November, 1826), and signed "W. S." The letter is, at least, in a good imitation of Scott's hand. It purported to be addressed to his friend, William Spencer, then ruined, and in Paris. Spencer was asked for a manuscript of Scott's for a friend (the German): Scott supposes him really to want it for himself. If ever Spencer publishes it, it must be as by W. S., and he must let it be supposed that it is Spencer's own work. Now the letter, in style as well as in handwriting, is almost beyond the ability of a forger. Every turn, every phrase, all the careless manner of it, is Sir Walter's. He certainly was in Paris at the date given, and he certainly breakfasted with Spencer. The letter may be quoted for the satisfaction of the curious.

PARIS, 4th November, 1826.

MY DEAR W. S., — I am constrained to make of this note a letter of initials, for I am not quite satisfied with myself in agreeing to write it, and there is no saying into whose hands it may fall.

The story which Anne has told me about your daft friend, the foreign monomaniac, is as clearly the case of a man who requires to be cognosced as I ever met with; but, as it appears to me that she has taken it most ridiculously to heart, we have brought our discussion of it to a conclusion by my consenting to her doing what you could not be told of until she had received the permission of papa.

She has possessed herself, for a long time past, of a tale which I had, at one time, the intention of making the first of a series of such things drawn from the history of Scotland — a notion which I afterward gave up; for Anne, however, that story has always possessed a great charm, and I allowed her to keep it, because I was under the impression that a mere story, which offers no particular merits but those of events and a plot, would not appear advantageously among works which had the higher object of painting character — that would be to take a step backward, which would never do — besides, as far as I can recollect, there are a great many anachronisms and freedoms used with persons and places which are not in keeping with the character of historian to which I now aspire.

I consider, then, that in authorising my daughter to give you that work as a panacea for the imaginary ills of a foreign monomaniac, I only permit a change of proprietorship. At the same time, in allowing Anne to make a present to you of what is but a trifle after all, I must make a most serious stipulation regarding it — for I tell you candidly that I believe W. S. himself to be the real *malade imaginaire* — that stipulation is, that if, at any time, you take the fancy of publishing that tale, you will do so with the initials only, and that you will do all that you can in fairness do to countenance the idea that it is a bairn of your ain.

I wish I could do something for you personally of some less doubtful character than that of humouring the caprices of a

daft man; but you know how I am placed at present. Believe, however, that you have no more sincere friend than

W. S.

Cabany deposited his account of the circumstances with the Minister of the Interior, on Nov. 24, 1854. On Nov. 29 Lockhart died. On March 3, 1855, Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, Mr. Gordon (Scott's amanuensis), and a niece of Scott's wrote to the *Athenæum*, denying the truth of the story. Cabany's answer was extremely ingenious, and, to be fair, was telling. He remarked that, on Nov. 14, 1814, Ballantyne wrote to Miss Edgeworth, to whom he had sent "Waverley," promising "ere long" another novel, "describing *more ancient manners*." Now the novels which followed "Waverley" described more modern manners — they were "Guy Mannering" and "The Antiquary." "Moredun," then, must be what Ballantyne had in his mind. Cabany easily detected inconsistencies in the arguments and statements of Mr. Skene and Mr. Gordon, and of the niece. The evidence of the niece was bad enough, careless enough, and, in dates, confused enough, to ruin the value of her testimony. Mr. Gordon asserted that Scott *never* signed "W. S." A letter of his, also, to W. S. (William Scrope) signed "W. S." was immediately produced. As to the assertion that Scott would not give away a work, he later gave two sermons to Gordon himself (Dec. 28, 1827).

That "Moredun" is not by Scott, that it cannot be by Scott, perhaps no one who tries to read it will deny. But the ingenuity of the introductory letter, the cleverness of the replies to Skene and Gordon, are perhaps without example in the records of literary forgery. As Sir Walter's niece remarked, "I cannot think that foreigners alone would have ventured on this." Who was the forger?

ANDREW LANG.

July 1894.

INTRODUCTION

TO

CASTLE DANGEROUS.

[*The following Introduction to "Castle Dangerous" was forwarded by Sir Walter Scott from Naples in February* 1832, *together with some corrections of the text, and notes on localities mentioned in the Novel.*

The materials for the Introduction must have been collected before he left Scotland, in September 1831; *but in the hurry of preparing for his voyage, he had not been able to arrange them so as to accompany the first edition of this Romance.*

A few notes, supplied by the Editor,[1] *are placed within brackets.*]

The incidents on which the ensuing Novel mainly turns are derived from the ancient Metrical Chronicle of "The Bruce," by Archdeacon Barbour, and from "The History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus," by David Hume of Godscroft; and are sustained by the immemorial tradition of the western parts of Scotland. They are so much in consonance with the spirit and manners of the troubled age to which they are referred, that I can see no reason for doubting their being founded in fact: the names, indeed, of numberless localities in the vicinity of Douglas Castle appear to attest, beyond suspicion, many even of the smallest circumstances embraced in the story of Godscroft.

[1] [J. G. Lockhart.]

Among all the associates of Robert the Bruce, in his great enterprise of rescuing Scotland from the power of Edward, the first place is universally conceded to James, the eighth Lord Douglas, to this day venerated by his countrymen as "the Good Sir James:"

> The Gud Schyr James of Douglas,
> That in his time sa worthy was,
> That off his price and his bounté,
> In far landis renownyt was he.
>
> BARBOUR.

> The Good Sir James, the dreadful blacke Douglas,
> That in his dayes so wise and worthie was,
> Wha here, and on the infidels of Spain,
> Such honour, praise, and triumphs did obtain.
>
> GORDON.

From the time when the King of England refused to reinstate him, on his return from France, where he had received the education of chivalry, in the extensive possessions of his family, — which had been held forfeited by the exertions of his father, William the Hardy — the young knight of Douglas appears to have embraced the cause of Bruce with enthusiastic ardour, and to have adhered to the fortunes of his sovereign with unwearied fidelity and devotion. "The Douglasse," says Hollinshed, "was right joyfully received of King Robert, in whose service he faithfully continued, both in peace and war, to his life's end. Though the surname and familie of the Douglasses was in some estimation of nobilitie before those daies, yet the rising thereof to honour chanced through this James Douglasse ; for, by meanes of his advancement, others of that lineage tooke occasion, by their singular manhood and noble prowess, shewed at sundrie times in defence of the realme, to grow to such height in authoritie and estimation, that their mightie puissance in nainrent,[1] lands, and great possessions, at length was

[1] Vassalage.

(through suspicion conceived by the kings that succeeded) the cause in part of their ruinous decay."

In every narrative of the Scottish war of independence, a considerable space is devoted to those years of perilous adventure and suffering which were spent by the illustrious friend of Bruce, in harassing the English detachments successively occupying his paternal territory, and in repeated and successful attempts to wrest the formidable fortress of Douglas Castle itself from their possession. In the English, as well as Scotch Chronicles, and in Rymer's "Fœdera," occur frequent notices of the different officers intrusted by Edward with the keeping of this renowned stronghold; especially Sir Robert de Clifford, ancestor of the heroic race of the Cliffords, Earls of Cumberland; his lieutenant, Sir Richard de Thurlewalle (written sometimes Thruswall), of Thirwall Castle, on the Tippal, in Northumberland; and Sir John de Walton, the romantic story of whose love-pledge, to hold the Castle of Douglas for a year and day, or surrender all hope of obtaining his mistress's favour, with the tragic consequences, softened in the Novel, is given at length in Godscroft, and has often been pointed out as one of the affecting passages in the chronicles of chivalry.[1]

The Author, before he had made much progress in this, probably the last of his Novels, undertook a journey to Douglasdale, for the purpose of examining the remains of the famous Castle, the Kirk of St. Bride of Douglas, the patron saint of that great family, and the various localities alluded to by Godscroft, in his account of the early adventures of Good Sir James; but though he was fortunate enough to find a zealous and well-informed *cicerone* in Mr. Thomas Haddow, and

[1] [The reader will find both this story, and that of Robert of Paris, in Sir W. Scott's Essay on Chivalry, published in 1818, in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. — *Ed.*]

had every assistance from the kindness of Mr. Alexander Finlay, the resident chamberlain of his friend, Lord Douglas, the state of his health at the time was so feeble that he found himself incapable of pursuing his researches, as in better days he would have delighted to do, and was obliged to be contented with such a cursory view of scenes, in themselves most interesting, as could be snatched in a single morning, when any bodily exertion was painful. Mr. Haddow was attentive enough to forward subsequently some notes on the points which the Author had seemed desirous of investigating; but these did not reach him until, being obliged to prepare matters for a foreign excursion in quest of health and strength, he had been compelled to bring his work, such as it is, to a conclusion.

The remains of the old Castle of Douglas are inconsiderable. They consist indeed of but one ruined tower, standing at a short distance from the modern mansion, which itself is only a fragment of the design on which the Duke of Douglas meant to reconstruct the edifice, after its last accidental destruction by fire.[1]

[1] [The following notice of Douglas Castle, &c., is from the "Description of the Sheriffdom of Lanark," by William Hamilton of Wishaw, written in the beginning of the last century, and printed by the Maitland Club of Glasgow in 1831: —

"Douglass parish, and baronie and lordship, heth very long appertained to the family of Douglass, and continued with the Earles of Douglass untill their fatall forfeiture, anno 1455; during which tyme there are many noble and important actions recorded in histories performed by them, by the lords and earls of that great family. It was thereafter given to Douglass, Earl of Anguse, and continued with them untill William, Earle of Anguse, was created Marquess of Douglass, anno 1633; and is now the principal seat of the Marquess of Douglass his family. It is a large baronie and parish, and ane laick patronage; and the Marquess is both titular and patron. He heth there, near to the church, a very considerable great house, called the Castle of Douglass; and near the church is a fyne village, called the town

His Grace had kept in view the ancient prophecy, that as often as Douglas Castle might be destroyed, it should rise again in enlarged dimensions and improved splendour, and projected a pile of building, which, if it had been completed, would have much exceeded any nobleman's residence then existing in Scotland — as, indeed, what has been finished, amounting to about one eighth part of the plan, is sufficiently extensive for the accommodation of a large establishment, and contains some apartments the dimensions of which are magnificent. The situation is commanding; and though the Duke's successors have allowed the mansion to continue as he left it, great expense has been lavished on the environs, which now present a vast sweep of richly undulated woodland, stretching to the borders of the Cairntable mountains, repeatedly mentioned as the favourite retreat of the great ancestor of the family in the days of his hardship and persecution. There remains at the head of the adjoining *bourg*, the choir of the ancient church of St. Bride, having beneath it the vault which was used till lately as the burial-place of this princely race, and only abandoned when their stone and leaden coffins had accumulated, in the course of five or six hundred years, in such a way that it could accommodate no more. Here a silver case, containing the dust of what was once the brave

of Douglass, long since erected in a burgh of baronie. It heth ane handsome church, with many ancient monuments and inscriptions on the old interments of the Earles of this place.

"The water of Douglas runs quyte through the whole length of this parish, and upon either side of the water it is called Douglasdale. It toucheth Clyde towards the north, and is bounded by Lesmahagow to the west, Kyle to the south-west, Crawfurd John and Carmichaell to the south and south-east. It is a pleasant strath, plentifull in grass and corn, and coall; and the minister is well provided.

"The lands of Heysleside, belonging to Samuel Douglass, has a good house and pleasant seat, close by a wood," &c. — p. 65.]

heart of Good Sir James, is still pointed out; and in the dilapidated choir above appears, though in a sorely ruinous state, the once magnificent tomb of the warrior himself. After detailing the well-known circumstances of Sir James's death in Spain, 20th August, 1330, where he fell, assisting the King of Arragon in an expedition against the Moors, when on his way back to Scotland from Jerusalem, to which he had conveyed the heart of Bruce — the old poet Barbour tells us that —

> Quhen his men lang had mad murnyn,
> Thai debowalyt him, and syne
> Gert scher him swa, that mycht be tane
> The flesch all haly fra the bane,
> And the carioune thar in haly place
> Erdyt, with rycht gret worschip, was.
>
> The banys haue thai with thaim tane;
> And syne ar to thair schippis gane;
> Syne towart Scotland held thair way,
> And thar ar cummyn in full gret hy.
> And the banys honorabilly
>
> In till the Kyrk off Douglas war
> Erdyt, with dule and mekill car.
> Schyr Archebald his sone gert syn
> Off alabastre, bath fair and fyne,
> Ordane a tumbe sa richly
> As it behowyt to swa worthy.

The monument is supposed to have been wantonly mutilated and defaced by a detachment of Cromwell's troops, who, as was their custom, converted the kirk of St. Bride of Douglas into a stable for their horses. Enough, however, remains to identify the resting-place of the great Sir James. The effigy, of dark stone, is cross-legged, marking his character as one who had died after performing the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and in actual conflict with the infidels of Spain; and the introduction of the HEART, adopted as an addition to the old arms of Douglas, in conse-

quence of the knight's fulfilment of Bruce's dying injunction, appears, when taken in connection with the posture of the figure, to set the question at rest The monument, in its original state, must have been not inferior in any respect to the best of the same period in Westminster Abbey; and the curious reader is referred for further particulars of it to "The Sepulchral Antiquities of Great Britain," by Edward Blore, F.S.A. London, 4to, 1826; where may also be found interesting details of some of the other tombs and effigies in the cemetery of the first house of Douglas.

As considerable liberties have been taken with the historical incidents on which this novel is founded, it is due to the reader to place before him such extracts from Godscroft and Barbour as may enable him to correct any mis-impression. The passages introduced in the Appendix, from the ancient poem of "The Bruce," will, moreover, gratify those who have not in their possession a copy of the text of Barbour, as given in the valuable quarto edition of my learned friend Dr. Jamieson, as furnishing on the whole a favourable specimen of the style and manner of a venerable classic, who wrote when Scotland was still full of the fame and glory of her liberators from the yoke of Plantagenet, and especially of Sir James Douglas, "of whom," says Godscroft, "we will not omit here (to shut up all) the judgment of those times concerning him, in a rude verse indeed, yet such as beareth witness of his true magnanimity and invincible mind in either fortune: —

Good Sir James Douglas (who wise, and wight, and worthy was)
Was never overglad in no winning, nor yet oversad for no tineing;
Good fortune and evil chance he weighed both in one balance.

W. S.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Extracts from "The History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus. By Master DAVID HUME *of Godscroft." Folio Edition.*

. . . AND here indeed the course of the King's misfortunes begins to make some halt and stay by thus much prosperous successe in his own person ; but more in the person of Sir James, by the re-conquests of his owne castles and countries. From hence he went into Douglasdale, where, by the means of his father's old servant, Thomas Dickson, he took in the Castle of Douglas, and not being able to keep it, he caused burn it, contenting himself with this, that his enemies had one strength fewer in that country than before. The manner of his taking of it is said to have beene thus : — Sir James, taking only with him two of his servants, went to Thomas Dickson, of whom he was received with tears, after he had revealed himself to him, for the good old man knew him not at first, being in mean and homely apparell. There he kept him secretly in a quiet chamber, and brought unto him such as had been trusty servants to his father, not all at once, but apart by one and one, for fear of discoverie. Their advice was, that on Palmsunday, when the English would come forth to the church, and his partners were conveened, that then he should give the word, and cry the Douglas slogan, and presently set upon them that should happen to be

there, who being dispatched, the Castle might be taken easily. This being concluded, and they come, so soon as the English were entered into the church with palms in their hands (according to the costume of that day), little suspecting or fearing any such thing, Sir James, according to their appointment, cryed too soon (a Douglas, a Douglas !) which being heard in the church (this was Saint Bride's church of Douglas), Thomas Dickson, supposing he had beene hard at hand, drew out his sword, and ran upon them, having none to second him but another man, so that, oppressed by the number of his enemies, he was beaten downe and slaine. In the meantime, Sir James being come, the English that were in the chancel kept off the Scots, and having the advantage of the strait and narrow entrie, defended themselves manfully. But Sir James encouraging his men, not so much by words as by deeds and good example, and having slain the boldest resisters, prevailed at last, and entring the place, slew some twenty-six of their number, and tooke the rest, about ten or twelve persons, intending by them to get the Castle upon composition, or to enter with them when the gates should be opened to let them in : but it needed not, for they of the Castle were so secure, that there was none left to keep it save the porter and the cooke, who knowing nothing of what had hapned at the church, which stood a large quarter of a mile from thence, had left the gate wide open, the porter standing without, and the cooke dressing the dinner within. They entred without resistance, and meat being ready, and the cloth laid, they shut the gates, and tooke their refection at good leasure.

Now that he had gotten the Castle into his hands, considering with himselfe (as he was a man no less advised than valiant) that it was hard for him to keep it, the English being as yet the stronger in that coun-

trey, who if they should besiege him, he knewe of no reliefe, he thought better to carry away such things as be most easily transported, gold, silver, and apparell, with ammunition and armour, whereof he had greatest use and need, and to destroy the rest of the provision, together with the Castle itselfe, then to diminish the number of his followers for a garrison there where it could do no good. And so he caused carrie the meale and malt, and other cornes and graine, into the cellar, and laid all together in one heape: then he took the prisoners and slew them, to revenge the death of his trustie and valiant servant, Thomas Dickson, mingling the victuals with their bloud, and burying their carkasses in the heap of corne: after that he struck out the heads of the barrells and puncheons, and let the drink runn through all ; and then he cast the carkasses of dead horses and other carrion amongst it, throwing the salt above all, so to make all together unusefull to the enemie ; and this cellar is called yet the Douglas Lairder. Last of all, he set the house on fire, and burnt all the timber, and what else the fire could overcome, leaving nothing but the scorched walls behind him. And this seemes to be the first taking of the Castle of Douglas, for it is supposed that he took it twice. For this service, and others done to Lord William his father, Sir James gave unto Thomas Dickson the lands of Hisleside, which hath beene given him before the castle was taken as an encouragement to whet him on, and not after, or he was slain in the church : which was both liberally and wisely done of him, thus to hearten and draw men to his service by such a noble beginning. The Castle being burnt, Sir James retired, and parting his men into divers companies, so as they might be most secret, he caused cure such as were wounded in the fight, and he himselfe kept as close as he could, waiting ever for an occasion

to enterprise something against the enemie. So soone as he was gone, the Lord Clifford being advertised of what had happened, came himselfe in person to Douglas, and caused re-edifie and repair the Castle in a very short time, unto which he also added a Tower, which is yet called Harries Tower from him, and so returned into England, leaving one Thurswall to be Captain thereof. — Pp. 26–28.

. . . . . .

He (Sir James Douglas) getting him again into Douglasdale, did use this stratagem against Thurswall, Captain of the Castle, under the said Lord Clifford. He caused some of his folk drive away the cattle that fed near unto the Castle, and when the Captain of the garrison followed to rescue, gave orders to his men to leave them and to flee away. Thus he did often to make the Captain slight such frays, and to make him secure, that he might not suspect any further end to be on it; which when he had wrought sufficiently (as he thought), he laid some men in ambuscado, and sent others away to drive such beasts as they should find in the view of the Castle, as if they had been thieves and robbers, as they had done often before. The Captain hearing of it, and supposing there was no greater danger now than had been before, issued forth of the Castle, and followed after them with such haste that his men (running who should be first) were disordered and out of their ranks. The drivers also fled as fast as they could till they had drawn the Captain a little way beyond the place of ambuscado, which when they perceived, rising quickly out of their covert, they set fiercely upon him and his company, and so slew himself and chased his men back to the Castle, some of whom were overtaken and slain, others got into the Castle and so were saved. Sir James, not being able to force the house, took what booty he could get without in the fields, and so departed. By

this means, and such other exploits, he so affrighted the enemy, that it was counted a matter of such great jeopardy to keep this Castle, that it began to be called the adventurous (or hazardous) Castle of Douglas : Whereupon Sir John Walton being in suit of an English lady, she wrote to him that when he had kept the adventurous Castle of Douglas seven years, then he might think himself worthy to be a suitor to her. Upon this occasion, Walton took upon him the keeping of it, and succeeded to Thurswall ; but he ran the same fortune with the rest that were before him.

For, Sir James having first dressed an ambuscado near unto the place, he made fourteen of his men take so many sacks, and fill them with grass, as though it had been corn, which they carried in the way toward Lanark, the chief market town in that county : so hoping to draw forth the Captain by that bait, and either to take him or the Castle, or both.

Neither was this expectation frustrate, for the Captain did bite, and came forth to have taken this victual (as he supposed). But ere he could reach these carriers, Sir James, with his company, had gotten between the castle and him : and these disguised carriers, seeing the Captain following after them, did quickly cast off their upper garments, wherein they had masked themselves, and throwing off their sacks, mounted themselves on horseback, and met the Captain with a sharp encounter, he being so much the more amazed that it was unlooked for : wherefore, when he saw these carriers metamorphosed into warriors, and ready to assault him, fearing (that which was) that there was some train laid for them, he turned about to have retired into the Castle ; but there also he met with his enemies ; between which two companies he and his followers were slain, so that none escaped ; the Captain afterwards being searched, tney found (as it is reported) his mistress's

letters about him. Then he went and took in the Castle, but it is uncertain (say our writers) whether by force or composition ; but it seems that the Constable, and those that were within, have yielded it up without force ; in regard that he used them so gently, which he would not have done if he had taken it at utterance. For he sent them all safe home to the Lord Clifford, and gave them also provision and money for their entertainment by the way. The Castle, which he had burnt only before, now he razeth, and casts down the walls thereof to the ground. By these and the like proceedings, within a short while he freed Douglasdale, Attrick Forest, and Jedward Forest, of the English garrisons and subjection. — *Ibid. p.* 29.

No. II.

[Extracts from The Bruce. — "Liber compositus per Magistrum Johannem Barber, Archidiaconum Abyrdonensem, de gestis, bellis, et virtutibus, Domini Roberti Brwyss, Regis Scocie illustrissimi, et de conquestu regni Scocie per eundem, et de Domino Jacobo de Douglas."— Edited by John Jamieson, D.D., F.R.S.E., &c. &c. Edinburgh, 1820.]

Now takis James his wiage
Towart Dowglas, his heretage,
With twa yemen, for owtyn ma;
That wes a symple stuff to ta,
A land or a castell to win.
The quhethir he yarnyt to begyn
Till bring purposs till ending;
For gud help is in gud begynnyng,

For gud begynnyng, and hardy,
Gyff it be folowit wittily,
May ger oftsyss unlikly thing
Cum to full conabill ending.
Swa did it here: but he wes wyss
And saw he mycht, on nakyn wyss,
Werray his fa with evyn mycht;
Tharfor he thocht to wyrk with slycht.
And in Dowglas daile, his countré,
Upon an evynnyng entryt he.
And than a man wonnyt tharby,
That was off freyndis weill mychty,
And ryche of moble, and off cateill;
And had bene till his fadyr leyll;
And till him selff, in his yowthed,
He haid done mony a thankfull deid.
Thom Dicson wes his name perfay.
Till him he send; and gan him pray,
That he wald cum all anerly
For to spek with him priuely.
And he but daunger till him gais:
Bot fra he tauld him quhat he wais,
He gret for joy, and for pité;
And him rycht till his houss had he;
Quhar in a chambre priuely
He held him, and his cumpany,
That nane had off him persaving.
Off mete, and drynk, and othyr thing,
That mycht thaim eyss, thai had plenté.
Sa wrocht he thorow sutelté,
That all the lele men off that land,
That with his fadyr war duelland,
This gud man gert cum, ane and ane,
And mak him manrent euir ilkane;
And he him selff fyrst homage maid.
Dowglas in part gret glaidschip haid,

That the gud men off his cuntré
Wald swagate till him bundyn be.
He speryt the conwyne off the land,
And quha the castell had in hand.
And thai him tauld all halily;
And syne amang them priuely
Thai ordanyt, that he still suld be
In hiddillis, and in priweté,
Till Palme Sonday, that wes ner hand,
The thrid day eftyr folowand.
For than the folk off that countré
Assemblyt at the kyrk wald be;
And thai, that in the castell wer,
Wald als be thar, thar palmys to ber,
As folk that had na dreid off ill;
For thai thoucht all wes at thair will
Than suld he cum with his twa men.
Bot, for that men suld nocht him ken,
He suld ane mantill haiff auld and bar
And a flaill, as he a thresscher war.
Undyr the mantill nocht for thi
He suld be armyt priuely.
And quhen the men off his countré,
That suld all boune befor him be,
His ensenye mycht her hym cry,
Then suld thai, full enforcely,
Rycht ymyddys the kyrk assaill
The Ingliss men with hard bataill
Swa that nane mycht eschap tham fra;
For thar throwch trowyt thai to ta
The castell, that besid wes ner.
And quhen this, that I tell you her,
Wes diuisyt, and undertane,
Ilkane till his howss hame is gane;
And held this spek in priueté,
Till the day off thar assembly.

The folk upon the Sonounday
Held to Saynct Bridis kyrk thair way;
And tha that in the castell war
Ischyt owt, bath les and mar,
And went thair palmys for to ber;
Owtane a cuk and a porter.
James off Dowglas off thair cummyng,
And quhat thai war, had witting;
And sped him till the kyrk in hy.
Bot or he come, too hastily
Ane off his criyt, "Dowglas! Dowglas!"
Thomas Dikson, that nerrest was
Till thaim that war off the castell,
That war all innouth the chancell,
Quhen he "Dowglas!" swa hey herd cry,
Drew owt his swerd; and fellely
Ruschyt amang thaim to and fra.
Bot ane or twa, for owtyn ma,
Than in hy war left lyand,
Quhill Dowglas come rycht at hand,
And then enforcyt on thaim the cry.
Bot thai the chansell sturdely
Held, and thaim defendyt wele,
Till off thair men war slayne sumdell.
Bot the Dowglace sa weill him bar,
That all the men, that with him war,
Had comfort off his wele doyng;
And he him sparyt nakyn thing,
Bot provyt swa his force in fycht,
That throw his worschip, and his mycht,
His men sa keynly helpyt than,
That thai the chansell on thaim wan.
Than dang thai on swa hardyly,
That in schort tyme men mycht se ly
The twa part dede, or then deand.
The lave war sesyt sone in hand,

Swa that off thretty levyt nane,
That thai ne war slayne ilkan, or tane.

James off Dowglas, quhen this wes done
The presoneris has he tane alsone;
And, with thaim off his cumpany,
Towart the castell went in hy,
Or noyiss, or cry, suld ryss.
And for he wald thaim sone suppriss,
That levyt in the castell war,
That war but twa for owtyn mar,
Fyve men or sex befor send he,
That fand all opyn the entré ;
And entryt, and the porter tuk
Rycht at the gate, and syne the cuk.
With that Dowglas come to the gat,
And entryt in for owtyn debate ;
And fand the mete all redy grathit,
With burdys set, and clathis layit.
The gaitis then he gert sper,
And sat, and eyt all at layser.
Syne all the gudis turssyt thai
That thaim thocht thai mycht haiff away ;
And namly wapnys, and armyng,
Siluer, and tresour, and clethyng.
Vyctallis, that mycht nocht tursyt be,
On this maner destroyit he.
All the victalis, owtane salt,
Als quheyt, and flour, and meill, and malt
In the wyne sellar gert he bring ;
And samyn on the flur all flyng.
And the presoneris that he had tane
Rycht thar in gert he heid ilkane ;
Syne off the townnys he hedis outstrak :
A foule mellé thar gane he mak.
For meile, and malt, and blud, and wyne,

Ran all to gidder in a mellyne,
That was unsemly for to se.
Tharfor the men off that countré
For swa fele thar mellyt wer,
Callit it the "Dowglas Lardner."
Syne tuk he salt, as Ic hard tell,
And ded horss, and sordid the well;
And brynt all, owtakyn stane;
And is forth, with his menye, gayne
Till his resett; for him thoucht weill,
Giff he had haldyn the castell,
It had bene assegyt raith;
And that him thoucht to mekill waith.
For he ne had hop off reskewyng.
And it is to peralous thing
In castell assegyt to be,
Quhar want is off thir thingis thre;
Victaill, or men with thair armyng,
Or than gud hop off rescuyng.
And for he dred thir thingis suld faile,
He chesyt furthwart to trawaill,
Quhar he mycht at his larges be;
And swa dryve furth his destané.

On this wise wes the castell tan,
And slayne that war tharin ilkan.
The Dowglas syne all his menye
Gert in ser placis depertyt be;
For men suld wyt quhar thai war,
That yeid depertyt her and thar.
Thaim that war woundyt gert he ly
In till hiddillis, all priuely;
And gert gud leechis till thaim bring
Quhill that thai war in till heling.
And him selff, with a few menye,
Quhile ane, quhile twa, and quhile thre,

And umquhill all him allane,
In hiddillis throw the land is gane.
Sa dred he Inglis men his mycht,
That he durst nocht wele cum in sycht.
For thai war that tyme all weldand
As maist lordis, our all the land.

Bot tythandis, that scalis sone,
Off this deid that Dowglas has done,
Come to the Cliffurd his ere, in hy,
That for his tynsaill wes sary ;
And menyt his men that thai had slayne,
And syne has to purpos tane,
To big the castell up agayne.
Thar for, as man of mekill mayne,
He assemblit gret cumpany,
And till Dowglas he went in hy.
And biggyt wp the castell swyth ;
And maid it rycht stalwart and styth
And put tharin victallis and men.
Ane off the Thyrwallys then
He left behind him Capitane,
And syne till Ingland went agayne.
Book IV. v. 255–460

Bot yeit than James of Dowglas
In Dowglas Daile travailland was ;
Or ellys weill ner hand tharby,
In hyddillys sumdeill priuely.
For he wald se his gouernyng,
That had the castell in keping :
And gert mak mony juperty,
To se quhethyr he wald ische blythly.
And quhen he persavyt that he
Wald blythly ische with his menye,

He maid a gadring priuely
Off thaim that war on his party ;
That war sa fele, that thai durst fycht
With Thyrwall, and all the mycht
Off thaim that in the castell war.
He schupe him in the nycht to far
To Sandylandis : and thar ner by
He him enbuschyt priuely,
And send a few a trane to ma ;
That sone in the mornyng gan ga,
And tuk catell, that wes the castell by,
And syne withdrew thaim hastely
Towart thaim that enbuschit war.
Than Thyrwall, for owtyn mar,
Gert arme his men, forowtyn baid;
And ischyt with all the men he haid:
And folowyt fast eftir the cry.
He wes armyt at poynt clenly,
Owtane [that] his hede wes bar.
Than, with the men that with him war,
The catell folowit he gud speid,
Rycht as a man that had na dreid,
Till that he gat off thaim a sycht.
Than prekyt thai with all thar mycht,
Folowand thaim owt off aray;
And thai sped thaim fleand, quhill thai
Fer by thair buschement war past:
And Thyrwall ay chassyt fast.
And than thai that enbuschyt war
Ischyt till him, bath les and mar,
And rayssyt sudanly the cry.
And thai that saw sa sudanly
That folk come egyrly prikand
Rycht betuix thaim and thair warand,
Thai war in to full gret effray.
And, for thai war owt off aray,

Sum off thaim fled, and sum abad.
And Dowglas, that thar with him had
A gret mengye, full egrely
Assaylyt, and scalyt thaim hastyly:
And in schort tyme ourraid thaim swa,
That weile nane eschapyt thaim fra.
Thyrwall, that wes thair capitane,
Wes thar in the bargane slane:
And off his men the mast party.
The lave fled full effraytly.

Book V. v. 7–62

CASTLE DANGEROUS.

CHAPTER I.

Hosts have been known at that dread sound to yield,
And, Douglas dead, his name hath won the field.

JOHN HOME.

IT was at the close of an early spring day, when nature, in a cold province of Scotland, was reviving from her winter's sleep, and the air at least, though not the vegetation, gave promise of an abatement of the rigour of the season, that two travellers, whose appearance at that early period sufficiently announced their wandering character, which, in general, secured a free passage even through a dangerous country, were seen coming from the south-westward, within a few miles of the Castle of Douglas, and seemed to be holding their course in the direction of the river of that name, whose dale afforded a species of approach to that memorable feudal fortress. The stream, small in comparison to the extent of its fame, served as a kind of drain to the country in its neighbourhood, and at the same time afforded the means of a rough road to the castle and village. The high lords to whom the castle had for ages belonged might, had they chosen, have made this access a great deal smoother and more convenient; but

there had been as yet little or no exercise for those geniuses, who have taught all the world that it is better to take the more circuitous road round the base of a hill than the direct course of ascending it on the one side, and descending it directly on the other, without yielding a single step to render the passage more easy to the traveller; still less were those mysteries dreamed of which MacAdam has of late days expounded. But, indeed, to what purpose should the ancient Douglases have employed his principles, even if they had known them in ever so much perfection? Wheel-carriages, except of the most clumsy description, and for the most simple operations of agriculture, were totally unknown. Even the most delicate female had no resource save a horse, or, in case of sore infirmity, a litter. The men used their own sturdy limbs, or hardy horses, to transport themselves from place to place; and travellers, females in particular, experienced no small inconvenience from the rugged nature of the country. A swollen torrent sometimes crossed their path, and compelled them to wait until the waters had abated their frenzy. The bank of a small river was occasionally torn away by the effects of a thunderstorm, a recent inundation, or the like convulsions of nature; and the wayfarer relied upon his knowledge of the district, or obtained the best local information in his power, how to direct his path so as to surmount such untoward obstacles.

The Douglas issues from an amphitheatre of mountains which bounds the valley to the southwest, from whose contributions, and the aid of sudden storms, it receives its scanty supplies. The general aspect of the country is that of the

pastoral hills of the south of Scotland, forming, as is usual, bleak and wild farms, many of which had, at no great length of time from the date of the story, been covered with trees; as some of them still attest by bearing the name of *shaw* — that is, wild natural wood. The neighbourhood of the Douglas water itself was flat land, capable of bearing strong crops of oats and rye, supplying the inhabitants with what they required of these productions. At no great distance from the edge of the river, a few special spots excepted, the soil capable of agriculture was more and more mixed with the pastoral and woodland country, till both terminated in desolate and partly inaccessible moorlands.

Above all, it was war-time, and of necessity all circumstances of mere convenience were obliged to give way to a paramount sense of danger; the inhabitants, therefore, instead of trying to amend the paths which connected them with other districts, were thankful that the natural difficulties which surrounded them rendered it unnecessary to break up or to fortify the access from more open countries. Their wants, with a very few exceptions, were completely supplied, as we have already said, by the rude and scanty produce of their own mountains and *holms*,[1] the last of which served for the exercise of their limited agriculture, while the better part of the mountains and forest glens produced pasture for their herds and flocks. The recesses of the unexplored depths of these sylvan retreats being seldom disturbed, especially since the lords of the district had laid aside, during this

[1] *Holms*, or flat plains, by the sides of the brooks and rivers, termed in the south, *Ings*.

time of strife, their constant occupation of hunting, the various kinds of game had increased of late very considerably; so that not only in crossing the rougher parts of the hilly and desolate country we are describing, different varieties of deer were occasionally seen, but even the wild cattle peculiar to Scotland sometimes showed themselves, and other animals, which indicated the irregular and disordered state of the period. The wild cat was frequently surprised in the dark ravines or the swampy thickets; and the wolf, already a stranger to the more populous districts of the Lothians, here maintained his ground against the encroachments of man, and was still himself a terror to those by whom he was finally to be extirpated. In winter especially, and winter was hardly yet past, these savage animals were wont to be driven to extremity for lack of food, and used to frequent, in dangerous numbers, the battle-field, the deserted churchyard — nay, sometimes the abodes of living men, there to watch for children, their defenceless prey, with as much familiarity as the fox nowadays will venture to prowl near the mistress's [1] poultry-yard.

From what we have said, our readers, if they have made — as who in these days has not? — the Scottish tour, will be able to form a tolerably just idea of the wilder and upper part of Douglas Dale, during the earlier period of the fourteenth century. The setting sun cast his gleams along a moorland country, which to the westward broke into larger swells, terminating in the mountains called the Larger and Lesser Cairntable. The first of these

[1] The good dame, or wife of a respectable farmer, is almost universally thus designated in Scotland.

is, as it were, the father of the hills in the neighbourhood, the source of an hundred streams, and by far the largest of the ridge, still holding in his dark bosom, and in the ravines with which his sides are ploughed, considerable remnants of those ancient forests with which all the high grounds of that quarter were once covered, and particularly the hills, in which the rivers — both those which run to the east and those which seek the west to discharge themselves into the Solway — hide, like so many hermits, their original and scanty sources.

The landscape was still illuminated by the reflection of the evening sun, sometimes thrown back from pool or stream; sometimes resting on grey rocks, huge cumberers of the soil, which labour and agriculture have since removed, and sometimes contenting itself with gilding the banks of the stream, tinged alternately grey, green, or ruddy, as the ground itself consisted of rock, or grassy turf, or bare earthen mound, or looked at a distance like a rampart of dark red porphyry. Occasionally, too, the eye rested on the steep brown extent of moorland, as the sunbeam glanced back from the little tarn or mountain pool, whose lustre, like that of the eye in the human countenance, gives a life and vivacity to every feature around.

The elder and stouter of the two travellers whom we have mentioned was a person well, and even showily, dressed, according to the finery of the times, and bore at his back, as wandering minstrels were wont, a case, containing a small harp, rote, or viol, or some such species of musical instrument for accompanying the voice The

leather case announced so much, although it proclaimed not the exact nature of the instrument. The colour of the traveller's doublet was blue, and that of his hose violet, with slashes which showed a lining of the same colour with the jerkin. A mantle ought, according to ordinary custom, to have covered this dress; but the heat of the sun, though the season was so early, had induced the wearer to fold up his cloak in small compass, and form it into a bundle, attached to the shoulders like the military greatcoat of the infantry soldier of the present day. The neatness with which it was made up argued the precision of a practised traveller, who had been long accustomed to every resource which change of weather required. A great profusion of narrow ribands or points, constituting the loops with which our ancestors connected their doublet and hose, formed a kind of cordon, composed of knots of blue or violet, which surrounded the traveller's person, and thus assimilated in colour with the two garments which it was the office of these strings to combine. The bonnet usually worn with this showy dress was of that kind with which Henry the Eighth and his son, Edward the Sixth, are usually represented. It was more fitted, from the gay stuff of which it was composed, to appear in a public place, than to encounter a storm of rain. It was parti-coloured, being made of different stripes of blue and violet; and the wearer arrogated a certain degree of gentility to himself, by wearing a plume of considerable dimensions of the same favourite colours. The features over which this feather drooped were in no degree remarkable for peculiarity of expression. Yet in so desolate a country as the west of

Scotland, it would not have been easy to pass the man without more minute attention than he would have met with where there was more in the character of the scenery to arrest the gaze of the passengers.

A quick eye, a sociable look, seeming to say, "Ay, look at me, I am a man worth noticing, and not unworthy your attention," carried with it, nevertheless, an interpretation which might be thought favourable or otherwise, according to the character of the person whom the traveller met. A knight or soldier would merely have thought that he had met a merry fellow, who could sing a wild song, or tell a wild tale, and help to empty a flagon, with all the accomplishments necessary for a boon companion at an hostelry, except perhaps an alacrity at defraying his share of the reckoning. A churchman, on the other hand, might have thought he of the blue and violet was of too loose habits, and accustomed too little to limit himself within the boundaries of beseeming mirth, to be fit society for one of his sacred calling. Yet the Man of Song had a certain steadiness of countenance, which seemed fitted to hold place in scenes of serious business as well as of gaiety. A wayfaring passenger of wealth (not at that time a numerous class) might have feared in him a professional robber, or one whom opportunity was very likely to convert into such; a female might have been apprehensive of uncivil treatment; and a youth, or timid person, might have thought of murder, or such direful doings. Unless privately armed, however, the minstrel was ill accoutred for any dangerous occupation. His only visible weapon was a small crooked sword, like what we

now call a hanger; and the state of the times would have justified any man, however peaceful his intentions, in being so far armed against the perils of the road.

If a glance at this man had in any respect prejudiced him in the opinion of those whom he met on his journey, a look at his companion would, so far as his character could be guessed at — for he was closely muffled up — have passed for an apology and warrant for his associate. The younger traveller was apparently in early youth, a soft and gentle boy, whose Sclavonic gown, the appropriate dress of the pilgrim, he wore more closely drawn about him than the coldness of the weather seemed to authorise or recommend. His features, imperfectly seen under the hood of his pilgrim's dress, were prepossessing in a high degree; and though he wore a walking sword, it seemed rather to be in compliance with general fashion than from any violent purpose he did so. There were traces of sadness upon his brow, and of tears upon his cheeks; and his weariness was such as even his rougher companion seemed to sympathise with, while he privately participated also in the sorrow which left its marks upon a countenance so lovely. They spoke together, and the elder of the two, while he assumed the deferential air proper to a man of inferior rank addressing a superior, showed, in tone and gesture, something that amounted to interest and affection.

"Bertram, my friend," said the younger of the two, "how far are we still from Douglas Castle? We have already come farther than the twenty miles which thou didst say was the distance from

Cammock — or how didst thou call the last hostelry which we left by daybreak?"

"Cumnock, my dearest lady — I beg ten thousand excuses — my gracious young lord."

"Call me Augustine," replied his comrade, "if you mean to speak as is fittest for the time."

"Nay, as for that," said Bertram, "if your ladyship can condescend to lay aside your quality, my own good breeding is not so firmly sewed to me but that I can doff it, and resume it again without its losing a stitch; and since your ladyship, to whom I am sworn in obedience, is pleased to command that I should treat you as my own son, shame it were to me if I were not to show you the affection of a father, more especially as I may well swear my great oath, that I owe you the duty of such, though well I wot it has, in our case, been the lot of the parent to be maintained by the kindness and liberality of the child; for when was it that I hungered or thirsted, and the *black stock*[1] of Berkley did not relieve my wants?"

"I would have it so," answered the young pilgrim; "I would have it so. What use of the mountains of beef, and the oceans of beer, which they say our domains produce, if there is a hungry heart among our vassalage, or especially if thou, Bertram, who hast served as the minstrel of our house for more than twenty years, shouldst experience such a feeling?"

"Certes, lady," answered Bertram, "it would be like the catastrophe which is told of the Baron of Fastenough, when his last mouse was starved to death in the very pantry; and if I escape this

[1] The table dormant, which stood in a baron's hall, was often so designated.

journey without such a calamity, I shall think myself out of reach of thirst or famine for the whole of my life."

"Thou hast suffered already once or twice by these attacks, my poor friend," said the lady.

"It is little," answered Bertram, "anything that I have suffered; and I were ungrateful to give the inconvenience of missing a breakfast, or making an untimely dinner, so serious a name. But then I hardly see how your ladyship can endure this gear much longer. You must yourself feel, that the plodding along these high lands, of which the Scots give us such good measure in their miles, is no jesting matter; and as for Douglas Castle, why it is still three good miles off."

"The question then is," quoth the lady, heaving a sigh, "what we are to do when we have so far to travel, and when the castle gates must be locked long before we arrive there?"

"For that I will pledge my word," answered Bertram. "The gates of Douglas, under the keeping of Sir John de Walton, do not open so easily as those of the buttery hatch at our own castle, when it is well oiled; and if your ladyship take my advice, you will turn southward ho! and in two days at farthest we shall be in a land where men's wants are provided for, as the inns proclaim it, with the least possible delay, and the secret of this little journey shall never be known to living mortal but ourselves, as sure as I am sworn minstrel and man of faith."

"I thank thee for thy advice, mine honest Bertram," said the lady, "but I cannot profit by it. Should thy knowledge of these parts possess

thee with an acquaintance with any decent house, whether it belong to rich or poor, I would willingly take quarters there, if I could obtain them from this time until to-morrow morning. The gates of Douglas Castle will then be open to guests of so peaceful an appearance as we carry with us, and — and — it will out — we might have time to make such applications to our toilet as might insure us a good reception, by drawing a comb through our locks, or such like foppery."

"Ah, madam!" said Bertram, "were not Sir John de Walton in question, methinks I should venture to reply, that an unwashed brow, an unkempt head of hair, and a look far more saucy than your ladyship ever wears, or can wear, were the proper disguise to trick out that minstrel's boy, whom you wish to represent in the present pageant."

"Do you suffer your youthful pupils to be indeed so slovenly and so saucy, Bertram?" answered the lady. "I for one will not imitate them in that particular; and whether Sir John be now in the Castle of Douglas or not, I will treat the soldiers who hold so honourable a charge with a washed brow, and a head of hair somewhat ordered. As for going back without seeing a castle which has mingled even with my very dreams — at a word, Bertram, thou mayst go that way, but I will not."

"And if I part with your ladyship on such terms," responded the minstrel, "now your frolic is so nearly accomplished, it shall be the foul fiend himself, and nothing more comely or less dangerous, that shall tear me from your side; and for lodging, there is not far from hence the house of one Tom Dickson of Hazelside, one of the most

honest fellows of the dale, and who, although a labouring man, ranked as high as a warrior, when I was in this country, as any noble gentleman that rode in the band of the Douglas."

"He is, then, a soldier?" said the lady.

"When his country or his lord need his sword," replied Bertram — "and, to say the truth, they are seldom at peace; but otherwise, he is no enemy, save to the wolf which plunders his herds."

"But forget not, my trusty guide," replied the lady, "that the blood in our veins is English, and, consequently, that we are in danger from all who call themselves foes to the ruddy Cross."

"Do not fear this man's faith," answered Bertram. "You may trust to him as to the best knight or gentleman of the land. We may make good our lodging by a tune or a song; and it may remember you that I undertook (provided it pleased your ladyship) to temporise a little with the Scots, who, poor souls, love minstrelsy, and when they have but a silver penny, will willingly bestow it to encourage the *gay science* — I promised you, I say, that we should be as welcome to them as if we had been born amidst their own wild hills; and for the best that such a house as Dickson's affords, the gleeman's son, fair lady, shall not breathe a wish in vain. And now, will you speak your mind to your devoted friend and adopted father, or rather your sworn servant and guide, Bertram the Minstrel, what it is your pleasure to do in this matter?"

"Oh, we will certainly accept of the Scot's hospitality," said the lady, "your minstrel word being plighted that he is a true man. — Tom Dickson, call you him?"

"Yes," replied Bertram, "such is his name; and by looking on these sheep, I am assured that we are now upon his land."

"Indeed!" said the lady, with some surprise; "and how is your wisdom aware of that?"

"I see the first letter of his name marked upon this flock," answered the guide. "Ah, learning is what carries a man through the world, as well as if he had the ring by virtue of which old minstrels tell that Adam understood the language of the beasts in Paradise. Ah, madam! there is more wit taught in the shepherd's shieling than the lady thinks of, who sews her painted seam in her summer bower."

"Be it so, good Bertram. And although not so deeply skilled in the knowledge of written language as you are, it is impossible for me to esteem its value more than I actually do; so hold we on the nearest road to this Tom Dickson's, whose very sheep tell of his whereabout. I trust we have not very far to go, although the knowledge that our journey is shortened by a few miles has so much recovered my fatigue, that methinks I could dance all the rest of the way."

CHAPTER II.

Rosalind. Well, this is the Forest of Arden.

Touchstone. Ay, now am I in Arden; the more fool I. When I was at home I was in a better place; but travellers must be content.

Rosalind. Ay, be so, good Touchstone. Look you, who comes here; a young man and an old, in solemn talk.

As You Like It, Scene IV. Act II.

As the travellers spoke together, they reached a turn of the path which presented a more extensive prospect than the broken face of the country had yet shown them. A valley, through which flowed a small tributary stream, exhibited the wild but not unpleasant features of "a lone vale of green braken;" here and there besprinkled with groups of alder-trees, of hazels, and of copse oak-wood, which had maintained their stations in the recesses of the valley, although they had vanished from the loftier and more exposed sides of the hills. The farm-house, or mansion-house (for, from its size and appearance, it might have been the one or the other), was a large but low building, and the walls of the out-houses were sufficiently strong to resist any band of casual depredators. There was nothing, however, which could withstand a more powerful force; for, in a country laid waste by war, the farmer was then, as now, obliged to take his chance of the great evils attendant upon that state of things; and his condition, never a very

eligible one, was rendered considerably worse by the insecurity attending it. About half a mile farther was seen a Gothic building of very small extent, having a half-dismantled chapel, which the minstrel pronounced to be the Abbey of St. Bride. "The place," he said, "I understand, is allowed to subsist, as two or three old monks and as many nuns, whom it contains, are permitted by the English to serve God there, and sometimes to give relief to Scottish travellers; and who have accordingly taken assurance with Sir John de Walton, and accepted as their superior a churchman on whom he thinks he can depend. But if these guests happen to reveal any secrets, they are, by some means or other, believed to fly towards the English governor; and therefore, unless your ladyship's commands be positive, I think we had best not trust ourselves to their hospitality."

"Of a surety, no," said the lady, "if thou canst provide me with lodgings where we shall have more prudent hosts."

At this moment, two human forms were seen to approach the farm-house in a different direction from the travellers, and speaking so high, in a tone apparently of dispute, that the minstrel and his companion could distinguish their voices though the distance was considerable. Having screened his eyes with his hand for some minutes, Bertram at length exclaimed, "By Our Lady, it is my old friend, Tom Dickson, sure enough! — What can make him in such bad humour with the lad, who, I think, may be the little wild boy, his son Charles, who used to run about and plait rushes some twenty years ago? It is lucky, however, we have found our friends astir; for, I warrant, Tom

hath a hearty piece of beef in the pot ere he goes to bed, and he must have changed his wont if an old friend hath not his share; and who knows had we come later, at what hour they may now find it convenient to drop latch and draw bolt so near a hostile garrison; for if we call things by their right names, such is the proper term for an English garrison in the castle of a Scottish nobleman."

"Foolish man," answered the lady, "thou judgest of Sir John de Walton as thou wouldst of some rude boor, to whom the opportunity of doing what he wills is a temptation and licence to exercise cruelty and oppression. Now, I could plight you my word, that, setting apart the quarrel of the kingdoms, which, of course, will be fought out in fair battle on both sides, you will find that English and Scottish, within this domain, and within the reach of Sir John de Walton's influence, live together as that same flock of sheep and goats do with the shepherd's dog; a foe from whom they fly upon certain occasions, but around whom they nevertheless eagerly gather for protection should a wolf happen to show himself."

"It is not to your ladyship," answered Bertram, "that I should venture to state my opinion of such matters; but the young knight, when he is sheathed in armour, is a different being from him who feasts in halls among press of ladies; and he that feeds by another man's fireside, and when his landlord, of all men in the world, chances to be the Black Douglas, has reason to keep his eyes about him as he makes his meal:—but it were better I looked after our own evening refreshment, than that I stood here gaping and talking about

other folk's matters." So saying, he called out in a thundering tone of voice, "Dickson! — what ho, Thomas Dickson! — will you not acknowledge an old friend, who is much disposed to trust his supper and night's lodging to your hospitality?"

The Scotchman, attracted by the call, looked first along the banks of the river, then upwards to the bare side of the hill, and at length cast his eyes upon the two figures who were descending from it.

As if he felt the night colder while he advanced from the more sheltered part of the valley to meet them, the Douglas Dale farmer wrapped closer around him the grey plaid, which, from an early period, has been used by the shepherds of the south of Scotland, and the appearance of which gives a romantic air to the peasantry and middle classes; and which, although less brilliant and gaudy in its colours, is as picturesque in its arrangement as the more military tartan mantle of the Highlands. When they approached near to each other, the lady might observe that this friend of her guide was a stout athletic man, somewhat past the middle of life, and already showing marks of the approach, but none of the infirmities, of age, upon a countenance which had been exposed to many a storm. Sharp eyes, too, and a quick observation, exhibited signs of vigilance, acquired by one who had lived long in a country where he had constant occasion for looking around him with caution. His features were still swollen with displeasure; and the handsome young man who attended him seemed to be discontented, like one who had undergone no gentle marks of his father's indignation, and who, from the sullen expression

which mingled with an appearance of shame on his countenance, seemed at once affected by anger and remorse.

"Do you not remember me, old friend?" said Bertram, as they approached within a distance for communing; "or have the twenty years which have marched over us since we met, carried along with them all remembrance of Bertram, the English minstrel?"

"In troth," answered the Scot, "it is not for want of plenty of your countrymen to keep you in my remembrance, and I have hardly heard one of them so much as whistle

Hey, now the day dawns,

but it has recalled some note of your blithe rebeck; and yet such animals are we, that I had forgot the mien of my old friend, and scarcely knew him at a distance. But we have had trouble lately; there are a thousand of your countrymen that keep garrison in the Perilous Castle of Douglas yonder, as well as in other places through the vale, and that is but a woful sight for a true Scotchman — even my own poor house has not escaped the dignity of a garrison of a man-at-arms, besides two or three archer knaves, and one or two slips of mischievous boys called pages, and so forth, who will not let a man say 'this is my own' by his own fireside. Do not, therefore, think hardly of me, old comrade, if I show you a welcome something colder than you might expect from a friend of other days; for, by St. Bride of Douglas, I have scarcely anything left to which I can say welcome."

"Small welcome will serve," said Bertram. "My son, make thy reverence to thy father's old

friend. Augustine is learning my joyous trade, but he will need some practice ere he can endure its fatigues. If you could give him some little matter of food, and a quiet bed for the night, there's no fear but that we shall both do well enough; for I dare say when you travel with my friend Charles there — if that tall youth chance to be my old acquaintance Charles — you will find yourself accommodated when his wants are once well provided for."

"Nay, the foul fiend take me if I do," answered the Scottish husbandman. "I know not what the lads of this day are made of — not of the same clay as their fathers to be sure — not sprung from the heather, which fears neither wind nor rain, but from some delicate plant of a foreign country, which will not thrive unless it be nourished under glass, with a murrain to it. The good Lord of Douglas — I have been his henchman, and can vouch for it — did not in his pagehood desire such food and lodging as, in the present day, will hardly satisfy such a lad as your friend Charles."

"Nay," said Bertram, "it is not that my Augustine is over nice; but, for other reasons, I must request of you a bed to himself; he hath of late been unwell."

"Ay, I understand," said Dickson, "your son hath had a touch of that illness which terminates so frequently in the black death you English folk die of? We hear much of the havoc it has made to the southward. Comes it hitherward?"

Bertram nodded.

"Well, my father's house," continued the farmer, "hath more rooms than one, and your son shall have one well-aired and comfortable; and for

supper, ye shall have a part of what is prepared for your countrymen, though I would rather have their room than their company. Since I am bound to feed a score of them, they will not dispute the claim of such a skilful minstrel as thou art to a night's hospitality. I am ashamed to say that I must do their bidding even in my own house. Well-a-day, if my good lord were in possession of his own, I have heart and hand enough to turn the whole of them out of my house, like — like " ——

" To speak plainly," said Bertram, " like a southron strolling gang from Redesdale, whom I have seen you fling out of your house like a litter of blind puppies, when not one of them looked behind to see who had done him the courtesy until he was halfway to Cairntable."

" Ay," answered the Scotchman, drawing himself up at least six inches taller than before; " then I had a house of my own, and a cause and an arm to keep it. Now I am — what signifies it what I am? — the noblest lord in Scotland is little better."

" Truly, friend," said Bertram, " now you view this matter in a rational light. I do not say that the wisest, the richest, or the strongest man in this world has any right to tyrannise over his neighbour, because he is the more weak, ignorant, and the poorer; but yet if he does enter into such a controversy, he must submit to the course of nature, and that will always give the advantage in the tide of battle to wealth, strength, and health."

" With permission, however," answered Dickson, " the weaker party, if he use his faculties to the utmost, may, in the long-run, obtain revenge upon

the author of his sufferings, which would be at least compensation for his temporary submission; and he acts simply as a man, and most foolishly as a Scotchman, whether he sustain these wrongs with the insensibility of an idiot, or whether he endeavour to revenge them before Heaven's appointed time has arrived. — But if I talk thus, I shall scare you, as I have scared some of your countrymen, from accepting a meal of meat, and a night's lodging, in a house where you might be called with the morning to a bloody settlement of a national quarrel."

"Never mind," said Bertram, "we have been known to each other of old; and I am no more afraid of meeting unkindness in your house, than you expect me to come here for the purpose of adding to the injuries of which you complain."

"So be it," said Dickson; "and you, my old friend, are as welcome to my abode as when it never held any guest save of my own inviting. — And you, my young friend, Master Augustine, shall be looked after as well as if you came with a gay brow and a light cheek, such as best becomes the *gay science.*"

"But wherefore, may I ask," said Bertram, "so much displeased but now at my young friend Charles?"

The youth answered before his father had time to speak. "My father, good sir, may put what show upon it he will, but shrewd and wise men wax weak in the brain in these troublous times. He saw two or three wolves seize upon three of our choicest wethers; and because I shouted to give the alarm to the English garrison, he was angry as if he could have murdered me — just for saving

the sheep from the jaws that would have devoured them."

"This is a strange account of thee, old friend," said Bertram. "Dost thou connive with the wolves in robbing thine own fold?"

"Why, let it pass if thou lovest me," answered the countryman; "Charles could tell thee something nearer the truth if he had a mind; but for the present let it pass."

The minstrel, perceiving that the Scotchman was fretted and embarrassed with the subject, pressed it no further.

At this moment, in crossing the threshold of Thomas Dickson's house, they were greeted with sounds from two English soldiers within. "Quiet, Anthony," said one voice — "quiet, man! — for the sake of common sense, if not common manners; — Robin Hood himself never sat down to his board ere the roast was ready."

"Ready!" quoth another rough voice; "it is roasting to rags, and small had been the knave Dickson's share, even of these rags, had it not been the express orders of the worshipful Sir John de Walton, that the soldiers who lie at outposts should afford to the inmates such provisions as are not necessary for their own subsistence."

"Hush, Anthony — hush, for shame!" replied his fellow-soldier, "if ever I heard our host's step, I heard it this instant; so give over thy grumbling, since our captain, as we all know, hath prohibited, under strict penalties, all quarrels between his followers and the people of the country."

"I am sure," replied Anthony, "that I have ministered occasion to none; but I would I were equally certain of the good meaning of this sullen-

browed Thomas Dickson towards the English soldiers, for I seldom go to bed in this dungeon of a house, but I expect my throat will gape as wide as a thirsty oyster before I awaken. Here he comes, however," added Anthony, sinking his sharp tones as he spoke; "and I hope to be excommunicated if he has not brought with him that mad animal, his son Charles, and two other strangers, hungry enough, I'll be sworn, to eat up the whole supper, if they do us no other injury."

"Shame of thyself, Anthony," repeated his comrade; "a good archer thou as ever wore Kendal green, and yet affect to be frightened for two tired travellers, and alarmed for the inroad their hunger may make on the night's meal. There are four or five of us here — we have our bows and our bills within reach, and scorn to be chased from our supper, or cheated out of our share of it by a dozen Scotchmen, whether stationary or strollers. — How say'st thou?" he added, turning to Dickson — "how say ye, quartermaster? It is no secret that, by the directions given to our post, we must inquire into the occupations of such guests as you may receive besides ourselves, your unwilling inmates; you are as ready for supper, I warrant, as supper is for you, and I will only delay you and my friend Anthony, who becomes dreadfully impatient, until you answer two or three questions which you wot of."

"Bend-the-Bow," answered Dickson, "thou art a civil fellow; and although it is something hard to be constrained to give an account of one's friends, because they chance to quarter in one's own house for a night or two, yet I must submit to the times, and make no vain opposition. You

may mark down in your breviary there, that upon the fourteenth day before Palm Sunday, Thomas Dickson brought to his house of Hazelside, in which you hold garrison, by orders from the English governor, Sir John de Walton, two strangers, to whom the said Thomas Dickson had promised refreshment, and a bed for the evening, if it be lawful at this time and place."

"But what are they, these strangers?" said Anthony, somewhat sharply.

"A fine world the while," murmured Thomas Dickson, "that an honest man should be forced to answer the questions of every paltry companion!" — But he mitigated his voice and proceeded. "The eldest of my guests is Bertram, an ancient English minstrel, who is bound on his own errand to the Castle of Douglas, and will communicate what he has to say of news to Sir John de Walton himself. I have known him for twenty years, and never heard anything of him save that he was good man and true. The younger stranger is his son, a lad recovering from the English disorder, which has been raging far and wide in Westmoreland and Cumberland."

"Tell me," said Bend-the-Bow, "this same Bertram, was he not about a year since in the service of some noble lady in our own country?"

"I have heard so," answered Dickson.

"We shall, in that case, I think, incur little danger," replied Bend-the-Bow, "by allowing this old man and his son to proceed on their journey to the castle."

"You are my elder and my better," answered Anthony; "but I may remind you that it is not so clearly our duty to give free passage, into a garri-

son of a thousand men of all ranks, to a youth who has been so lately attacked by a contagious disorder; and I question if our commander would not rather hear that the Black Douglas, with a hundred devils as black as himself, since such is his colour, had taken possession of the outpost of Hazelside with sword and battle-axe, than that one person suffering under this fell sickness had entered peaceably, and by the opened wicket of the castle."

"There is something in what thou sayest, Anthony," replied his comrade; "and considering that our governor, since he has undertaken the troublesome job of keeping a castle which is esteemed so much more dangerous than any other within Scotland, has become one of the most cautious and jealous men in the world, we had better, I think, inform him of the circumstance, and take his commands how the stripling is to be dealt with."

"Content am I," said the archer; "and first, methinks, I would just, in order to show that we know what belongs to such a case, ask the stripling a few questions, as how long he has been ill, by what physicians he has been attended, when he was cured, and how his cure is certified, &c."

"True, brother," said Bend-the-Bow. "Thou hearest, minstrel, we would ask thy son some questions — What has become of him? — he was in this apartment but now."

"So please you," answered Bertram, "he did but pass through the apartment. Mr. Thomas Dickson, at my entreaty, as well as in respectful reverence to your honour's health, carried him

through the room without tarriance, judging his own bed-chamber the fittest place for a young man recovering from a severe illness, and after a day of no small fatigue."

"Well," answered the elder archer, "though it is uncommon for men who, like us, live by bow-string and quiver, to meddle with interrogations and examinations, yet, as the case stands, we must make some inquiries of your son, ere we permit him to set forth to the Castle of Douglas, where you say his errand leads him."

"Rather my errand, noble sir," said the minstrel, "than that of the young man himself."

"If such be the case," answered Bend-the-Bow, "we may sufficiently do our duty by sending yourself, with the first grey light of dawn, to the castle, and letting your son remain in bed, which I warrant is the fittest place for him, until we shall receive Sir John de Walton's commands whether he is to be brought onward or not."

"And we may as well," said Anthony, "since we are to have this man's company at supper, make him acquainted with the rules of the out garrison stationed here for the time." So saying, he pulled a scroll from his leather pouch, and said, "Minstrel, canst thou read?"

"It becomes my calling," said the minstrel.

"It has nothing to do with mine, though," answered the archer, "and therefore do thou read these regulations aloud; for since I do not comprehend these characters by sight, I lose no chance of having them read over to me as often as I can, that I may fix their sense in my memory. So beware that thou readest the words letter for letter as they are set down; for thou dost so at thy peril,

Sir Minstrel, if thou readest not like a true man."

"On my minstrel word," said Bertram, and began to read excessively slow; for he wished to gain a little time for consideration, which he foresaw would be necessary to prevent his being separated from his mistress, which was likely to occasion her much anxiety and distress. He therefore began thus: "'Outpost at Hazelside, the steading of Goodman Thomas Dickson' — Ay, Thomas, and is thy house so called?"

"It is the ancient name of the steading," said the Scot, "being surrounded by a hazel-shaw, or thicket."

"Hold your chattering tongue, minstrel," said Anthony, "and proceed, as you value that or your ears, which you seem disposed to make less use of."

"'His garrison,'" proceeded the minstrel, reading, "'consists of a lance with its furniture.' What, then, a lance, in other words, a belted knight, commands this party?"

"'Tis no concern of thine," said the archer.

"But it is," answered the minstrel; "we have a right to be examined by the highest person in presence."

"I will show thee, thou rascal," said the archer, starting up, "that I am lance enough for thee to reply to, and I will break thy head if thou say'st a word more."

"Take care, brother Anthony," said his comrade, "we are to use travellers courteously — and, with your leave, those travellers best who come from our native land."

"It is even so stated here," said the minstrel,

and he proceeded to read: "'The watch at this outpost of Hazelside[1] shall stop and examine all travellers passing by the said station, suffering such to pass onwards to the town of Douglas, or to Douglas Castle, always interrogating them with civility, and detaining and turning them back if there arise matter of suspicion; but conducting themselves in all matters civilly and courteously to the people of the country, and to those who travel in it.' You see, most excellent and valiant archer," added the commentator Bertram, "that courtesy and civility are, above all, recommended to your worship in your conduct towards the inhabitants, and those passengers who, like us, may chance to fall under your rules in such matters."

"I am not be told at this time of day," said the archer, "how to conduct myself in the discharge of my duties. Let me advise you, Sir Minstrel, to be frank and open in your answers to our inquiries, and you shall have no reason to complain."

"I hope, at all events," said the minstrel, "to have your favour for my son, who is a delicate stripling, and not accustomed to play his part among the crew which inhabit this wild world."

"Well," continued the elder and more civil of the two archers, "if thy son be a novice in this terrestrial navigation, I warrant that thou, my friend, from thy look and manner of speech, hast

[1] [Hazelside Place, the fief granted to Thomas Dickson by William the Hardy, seventh Lord Douglas, is still pointed out about two miles to the south-west of the Castle Dangerous. Dickson was sixty years of age at the time when Lord James first appeared in Douglasdale. His heirs kept possession of the fief for centuries; and some respectable gentlemen's families in Lanarkshire still trace themselves to this ancestor. — *From Notes by Mr. Haddow.*]

enough of skill to use thy compass. To comfort thee, although thou must thyself answer the questions of our governor or deputy governor, in order that he may see there is no offence in thee, I think there may be permission granted for thy son's residing here in the convent hard by (where the nuns, by the way, are as old as the monks, and have nearly as long beards, so thou mayst be easy about thy son's morals), until thou hast done thy business at Douglas Castle, and art ready to resume thy journey."

"If such permission," said the minstrel, "can be obtained, I should be better pleased to leave him at the abbey, and go myself, in the first place, to take the directions of your commanding officer."

"Certainly," answered the archer, "that will be the safest and best way; and with a piece or two of money, thou mayst secure the protection of the abbot."

"Thou say'st well," answered the minstrel; "I have known life, I have known every stile, gap, pathway, and pass of this wilderness of ours for some thirty years; and he that cannot steer his course fairly through it like an able seaman, after having served such an apprenticeship, can hardly ever be taught, were a century to be given him to learn it in."

"Since thou art so expert a mariner," answered the archer Anthony, "thou hast, I warrant me, met in thy wanderings a potation called a morning's draught, which they who are conducted by others, where they themselves lack experience, are used to bestow upon those who undertake the task of guide upon such an occasion?"

"I understand you, sir," quoth the minstrel, "and although money, or *drink-geld*, as the Fleming calls it, is rather a scarce commodity in the purse of one of my calling, yet, according to my feeble ability, thou shalt have no cause to complain that thine eyes or those of thy comrades have been damaged by a Scottish mist, while we can find an English coin to pay for the good liquor which should wash them clear."

"Content," said the archer; "we now understand each other; and if difficulties arise on the road, thou shalt not want the countenance of Anthony to sail triumphantly through them. But thou hadst better let thy son know soon of the early visit to the abbot to-morrow, for thou mayst guess that we cannot and dare not delay our departure for the convent a minute after the eastern sky is ruddy; and, with other infirmities, young men often are prone to laziness and a love of ease."

"Thou shalt have no reason to think so," answered the minstrel; "not the lark himself, when waked by the first ray peeping over the black cloud, springs more lightly to the sky, than will my Augustine answer the same brilliant summons. And now we understand each other, I would only further pray you to forbear light talk while my son is in your company — a boy of innocent life, and timid in conversation."

"Nay, jolly minstrel," said the elder archer, "thou givest us here too gross an example of Satan reproving sin. If thou hast followed thy craft for twenty years, as thou pretendest, thy son, having kept thee company since childhood, must by this time be fit to open a school to teach even devils the practice of the seven deadly sins, of which

none know the theory if those of the *gay science* are lacking."

"Truly, comrade, thou speakest well," answered Bertram, "and I acknowledge that we minstrels are too much to blame in this matter. Nevertheless, in good sooth, the fault is not one of which I myself am particularly guilty: on the contrary, I think that he who would wish to have his own hair honoured when time has strewed it with silver, should so rein his mirth when in the presence of the young, as may show in what respect he holds innocence. I will, therefore, with your permission, speak a word to Augustine, that tomorrow we must be on foot early."

"Do so, my friend," said the English soldier; "and do the same the more speedily that our poor supper is still awaiting until thou art ready to partake of it."

"To which, I promise thee," said Bertram, "I am disposed to entertain no delay."

"Follow me, then," said Dickson, "and I will show thee where this young bird of thine has his nest."

Their host accordingly tripped up the wooden stair, and tapped at a door, which he thus indicated was that of his younger guest.

"Your father," continued he, as the door opened, "would speak with you, Master Augustine."

"Excuse me, my host," answered Augustine; "the truth is, that this room being directly above your eating-chamber, and the flooring not in the best possible repair, I have been compelled to the unhandsome practice of eavesdropping, and not a word has escaped me that passed concerning my proposed residence at the abbey, our journey to-

morrow, and the somewhat early hour at which I must shake off sloth, and, according to thy expression, fly down from the roost."

"And how dost thou relish," said Dickson, "being left with the Abbot of St. Bride's little flock here?"

"Why, well," said the youth, "if the abbot is a man of respectability becoming his vocation, and not one of those swaggering churchmen, who stretch out the sword, and bear themselves like rank soldiers in these troublous times."

"For that, young master," said Dickson, "if you let him put his hand deep enough into your purse, he will hardly quarrel with anything."

"Then I will leave him to my father," replied Augustine, "who will not grudge him anything he asks in reason."

"In that case," replied the Scotchman, "you may trust to our abbot for good accommodation — and so both sides are pleased."

"It is well, my son," said Bertram, who now joined in the conversation; "and that thou mayst be ready for thy early travelling, I shall presently get our host to send thee some food, after partaking of which thou shouldst go to bed and sleep off the fatigue of to-day, since to-morrow will bring work for itself."

"And as for thy engagement to these honest archers," answered Augustine, "I hope you will be able to do what will give pleasure to our guides, if they are disposed to be civil and true men."

"God bless thee, my child!" answered Bertram; "thou knowest already what would drag after thy neck all the English archers that were ever on this

side of the Solway. There is no fear of a grey goose shaft, if you sing a *reveillez* like to that which chimed even now from that silken nest of dainty young goldfinches."

"Hold me as in readiness, then," said the seeming youth, "when you depart to-morrow morning. I am within hearing, I suppose, of the bells of St. Bride's chapel, and have no fear, through my sloth, of keeping you or your company waiting."

"Good-night, and God bless thee, my child!" again said the minstrel; "remember that your father sleeps not far distant, and on the slightest alarm will not fail to be with you. I need scarce bid thee recommend thyself, meantime, to the great Being, who is the friend and father of us all."

The pilgrim thanked his supposed father for his evening blessing, and the visitors withdrew without further speech at the time, leaving the young lady to those engrossing fears which, the novelty of her situation and the native delicacy of her sex being considered, naturally thronged upon her.

The tramp of a horse's foot was not long after heard at the house of Hazelside, and the rider was welcomed by its garrison with marks of respect. Bertram understood so much as to discover from the conversation of the warders that this late arrival was Aymer de Valence, the knight who commanded the little party, and to the furniture of whose lance, as it was technically called, belonged the archers with whom we have already been acquainted, a man-at-arms or two, a certain proportion of pages or grooms, and, in short, the command and guidance of the garrison at Thomas Dickson's, while in rank he was deputy governor of Douglas Castle.

To prevent all suspicion respecting himself and his companion, as well as the risk of the latter being disturbed, the minstrel thought it proper to present himself to the inspection of this knight, the great authority of the little place. He found him, with as little scruple as the archers heretofore, making a supper of the relics of the roast beef.

Before this young knight Bertram underwent an examination, while an old soldier took down in writing such items of information as the examinate thought proper to express in his replies, both with regard to the minutiæ of his present journey, his business at Castle Douglas, and his route when that business should be accomplished; a much more minute examination, in a word, than he had hitherto undergone by the archers, or perhaps than was quite agreeable to him, being incumbered with at least the knowledge of one secret, whatever more. Not that this new examinator had anything stern or severe in his looks or his questions. As to the first, he was mild, gentle, and "meek as a maid," and possessed exactly of the courteous manners ascribed by our father Chaucer to the pattern of chivalry whom he describes upon his pilgrimage to Canterbury. But with all his gentleness, De Valence showed a great degree of acuteness and accuracy in his queries; and well pleased was Bertram that the young knight did not insist upon seeing his supposed son, although even in that case his ready wit had resolved, like a seaman in a tempest, to sacrifice one part to preserve the rest. He was not, however, driven to this extremity, being treated by Sir Aymer with that degree of courtesy which in that age men of

song were in general thought entitled to. The knight kindly and liberally consented to the lad's remaining in the convent, as a fit and quiet residence for a stripling and an invalid, until Sir John de Walton should express his pleasure on the subject; and Sir Aymer consented to this arrangement the more willingly, as it averted all possible danger of bringing disease into the English garrison.

By the young knight's order, all in Dickson's house were despatched earlier to rest than usual; the matin bell of the neighbouring chapel being the signal for their assembly by daybreak. They rendezvoused accordingly, and proceeded to St. Bride's, where they heard mass, after which an interview took place between the Abbot Jerome and the minstrel, in which the former undertook, with the permission of De Valence, to receive Augustine into his abbey as a guest for a few days, less or more, and for which Bertram promised an acknowledgment in name of alms, which was amply satisfactory.

"So be it," said Bertram, taking leave of his supposed son; "rely on it I will not tarry a day longer at Douglas Castle than shall suffice for transacting my business there, which is to look after the old books you wot of, and I will speedily return for thee to the Abbey of St. Bride, to resume in company our journey homeward."

"O father," replied the youth, with a smile, "I fear, if you get among romances and chronicles, you will be so earnest in your researches, that you will forget poor Augustine and his concerns."

"Never fear me, Augustine," said the old man, making the motion of throwing a kiss towards the

boy; "thou art good and virtuous, and Heaven will not neglect thee were thy father unnatural enough to do so. Believe me, all the old songs since Merlin's day shall not make me forget thee."

Thus they separated, the minstrel, with the English knight and his retinue, to move towards the castle, and the youth in dutiful attendance on the venerable abbot, who was delighted to find that his guest's thoughts turned rather upon spiritual things than on the morning repast, of the approach of which he could not help being himself sensible.

CHAPTER III.

The night, methinks, is but the daylight sick,
It looks a little paler; 'tis a day
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Merchant of Venice.

To facilitate the progress of the party on its way to Douglas Castle, the Knight of Valence offered the minstrel the convenience of a horse, which the fatigues of yesterday made him gladly accept. Any one acquainted with equestrian exercise is aware that no means of refreshment carries away the sense of fatigue from over-walking so easily as the exchange to riding, which calls into play another set of muscles, and leaves those which have been over-exerted an opportunity of resting through change of motion, more completely than they could in absolute repose. Sir Aymer de Valence was sheathed in armour, and mounted on his charger; two of the archers, a groom of mean rank, and a squire, who looked in his day for the honour of knighthood, completed the detachment, which seemed so disposed as to secure the minstrel from escape, and to protect him against violence. "Not," said the young knight, addressing himself to Bertram, "that there is usually danger in travelling in this country, any more than in the most quiet districts of England; but some disturbances, as you may have learnt, have broken out here within this last year, and have caused the garrison

of Castle Douglas to maintain a stricter watch. But let us move on, for the complexion of the day is congenial with the original derivation of the name of the country, and the description of the chiefs to whom it belonged — *Sholto Dhu Glass* — (see yon dark grey man), and dark grey will our route prove this morning, though by good luck it is not long."

The morning was indeed what the original Gaelic words implied, a drizzly, dark, moist day; the mist had settled upon the hills, and unrolled itself upon brook, glade, and tarn, and the spring breeze was not powerful enough to raise the veil, though, from the wild sounds which were heard occasionally on the ridges and through the glens, it might be supposed to wail at a sense of its own inability. The route of the travellers was directed by the course which the river had ploughed for itself down the valley, the banks of which bore in general that dark grey livery which Sir Aymer de Valence had intimated to be the prevalent tint of the country. Some ineffectual struggles of the sun shot a ray here and there to salute the peaks of the hills; yet these were unable to surmount the dulness of a March morning, and, at so early an hour, produced a variety of shades, rather than a gleam of brightness, upon the eastern horizon. The view was monotonous and depressing, and apparently the good knight Aymer sought some amusement in occasional talk with Bertram, who, as was usual with his craft, possessed a fund of knowledge, and a power of conversation, well suited to pass away a dull morning. The minstrel, well pleased to pick up such information as he might be able concerning the present state of the

country, embraced every opportunity of sustaining the dialogue.

"I would speak with you, Sir Minstrel," said the young knight. "If thou dost not find the air of this morning too harsh for thine organs, heartily do I wish thou wouldst fairly tell me what can have induced thee, being, as thou seemest, a man of sense, to thrust thyself into a wild country like this, at such a time. — And you, my masters," addressing the archers, and the rest of the party, "methinks it would be as fitting and seeming if you reined back your steeds for a horse's length or so, since I apprehend you can travel on your way without the pastime of minstrelsy." The bowmen took the hint, and fell back, but, as was expressed by their grumbling observations, by no means pleased that there seemed little chance of their overhearing what conversation should pass between the young knight and the minstrel, which proceeded as follows: —

"I am, then, to understand, good minstrel," said the knight, "that you, who have in your time borne arms, and even followed St. George's red-cross banner to the Holy Sepulchre, are so little tired of the danger attending our profession, that you feel yourself attracted unnecessarily to regions where the sword, for ever loose in its scabbard, is ready to start on the slightest provocation?"

"It would be hard," replied the minstrel bluntly, "to answer such a question in the affirmative; and yet, when you consider how nearly allied is his profession who celebrates deeds of arms with that of the knight who performs them, your honour, I think, will hold it advisable that a minstrel desirous of doing his devoir, should,

like a young knight, seek the truth of adventures where it is to be found, and rather visit countries where the knowledge is preserved of high and noble deeds, than those lazy and quiet realms, in which men live indolently, and die ignobly in peace, or by sentence of law. You yourself, sir, and those like you, who hold life cheap in respect of glory, guide your course through this world on the very same principle which brings your poor rhyming servant Bertram from a far province of merry England, to this dark country of rugged Scotland called Douglas Dale. You long to see adventures worthy of notice, and I (under favour for naming us two in the same breath) seek a scanty and precarious, but not a dishonourable living, by preparing for immortality, as well as I can, the particulars of such exploits, especially the names of those who were the heroes of these actions. Each, therefore, labours in his vocation; nor can the one be justly wondered at more than the other, seeing that if there be any difference in the degrees of danger to which both the hero and the poet are exposed, the courage, strength, arms, and address of the valiant knight render it safer for him to venture into scenes of peril, than for the poor man of rhyme."

"You say well," answered the warrior; "and although it is something of novelty to me to hear your craft represented as upon a level with my own mode of life, yet shame were it to say that the minstrel who toils so much to keep in memory the feats of gallant knights, should not himself prefer fame to existence, and a single achievement of valour to a whole age without a name, or to affirm that he follows a mean and unworthy profession."

"Your worship will then acknowledge," said the minstrel, "that it is a legitimate object in such as myself, who, simple as I am, have taken my regular degrees among the professors of the *gay science* at the capital town of Aigues-Mortes, to struggle forward into this northern district, where I am well assured many things have happened which have been adapted to the harp by minstrels of great fame in ancient days, and have become the subject of lays which lie deposited in the library of Castle Douglas, where, unless copied over by some one who understands the old British characters and language, they must, with whatever they may contain, whether of entertainment or edification, be speedily lost to posterity. If these hidden treasures were preserved and recorded by the minstrel art of my poor self and others, it might be held well to compensate for the risk of a chance blow of a broadsword, or the sweep of a brown bill, received while I am engaged in collecting them; and I were unworthy of the name of a man, much more of an inventor or finder,[1] should I weigh the loss of life, a commodity always so uncertain, against the chance of that immortality which will survive in my lay after my broken voice and shivered harp shall no longer be able either to express tune or accompany tale."

"Certainly," said Sir Aymer, "having a heart to feel such a motive, you have an undoubted right

[1] The name of Maker or Makar stands for *Poet* (with the original sense of which word it exactly corresponds) in the old Scottish language. That of *Trouveur* or Troubadour — Finder, in short — has a similar meaning, and almost in every country the poetical tribes have been graced with the same epithets, inferring the property of those who employ invention or creation.

to express it; nor should I have been in any degree disposed to question it had I found many minstrels prepared, like yourself, to prefer renown even to life itself, which most men think of greatly more consequence."

"There are, indeed, noble sir," replied Bertram, "minstrels, and, with your reverence, even belted knights themselves, who do not sufficiently value that renown which is acquired at the risk of life. To such ignoble men we must leave their own reward — let us abandon to them earth, and the things of earth, since they cannot aspire to that glory which is the *best* reward of others."

The minstrel uttered these last words with such enthusiasm, that the knight drew his bridle, and stood fronting Bertram, with his countenance kindling at the same theme, on which, after a short silence, he expressed himself with a like vivacity.

"Well fare thy heart, gay companion! I am happy to see there is still so much enthusiasm surviving in the world. Thou hast fairly won the minstrel groat; and if I do not pay it in conformity to my sense of thy merit, it shall be the fault of dame Fortune, who has graced my labours in these Scottish wars with the niggard pay of Scottish money. A gold piece or two there must be remaining of the ransom of one French knight, whom chance threw into my hands, and that, my friend, shall surely be thine own; and hark thee, I, Aymer de Valence, who now speak to thee, am born of the noble House of Pembroke; and, though now landless, shall, by the grace of Our Lady, have in time a fitting establishment, wherein I will find room for a minstrel like thee, if thy

talents have not by that time found thee a better patron."

"Thank thee, noble knight," said the minstrel, "as well for thy present intentions, as I hope I shall for thy future performance; but I may say with truth, that I have not the sordid inclination of many of my brethren."

"He who partakes the true thirst of noble fame," said the young knight, "can have little room in his heart for the love of gold. But thou hast not yet told me, friend minstrel, what are the motives, in particular, which have attracted thy wandering steps to this wild country?"

"Were I to do so," replied Bertram, rather desirous to avoid the question, as in some respects too nearly bordering on the secret purpose of his journey, "it might sound like a studied panegyric on thine own bold deeds, Sir Knight, and those of your companions in arms; and such adulation, minstrel as I am, I hate like an empty cup at a companion's lips. But let me say in few words, that Douglas Castle, and the deeds of valour which it has witnessed, have sounded wide through England; nor is there a gallant knight or trusty minstrel, whose heart does not throb at the name of the stronghold, which, in former days, the foot of an Englishman never entered, except in hospitality. There is a magic in the very names of Sir John de Walton and Sir Aymer de Valence, the gallant defenders of a place so often won back by its ancient lords, and with such circumstances of valour and cruelty, that it bears, in England, the name of the Dangerous Castle."

"Yet I would fain hear," answered the knight, "your own minstrel account of those legends which

have induced you, for the amusement of future times, to visit a country which, at this period, is so distracted and perilous."

"If you can endure the length of a minstrel tale," said Bertram — "I for one am always amused by the exercise of my vocation, and have no objection to tell my story, provided you do not prove an impatient listener."

"Nay, for that matter," said the young knight, "a fair listener thou shalt have of me; and if my reward be not great, my attention at least shall be remarkable."

"And he," said the minstrel, "must be a poor gleeman who does not hold himself better paid with that, than with gold or silver, were the pieces English rose-nobles. On this condition, then, I begin a long story, which may, in one or other of its details, find subject for better minstrels than myself, and be listened to by such warriors as you hundreds of years hence."

CHAPTER IV.

While many a merry lay and many a song
Cheer'd the rough road, we wish'd the rough road long;
The rough road then returning in a round,
Mark'd their impatient steps, for all was fairy ground.

DR. JOHNSON.

"IT was about the year of redemption one thousand two hundred and eighty-five years," began the minstrel, "when King Alexander the Third of Scotland lost his daughter Margaret, whose only child, of the same name, called the Maiden of Norway (as her father was king of that country), became the heiress of this kingdom of Scotland, as well as of her father's crown. An unhappy death was this for Alexander, who had no nearer heirs left of his own body than this grandchild. She indeed might claim his kingdom by birthright; but the difficulty of establishing such a claim of inheritance must have been anticipated by all who bestowed a thought upon the subject. The Scottish king, therefore, endeavoured to make up for his loss by replacing his late Queen, who was an English princess, sister of our Edward the First, with Juletta, daughter of the Count de Dreux. The solemnities at the nuptial ceremony, which took place in the town of Jedburgh, were very great and remarkable, and particularly when, amidst the display of a pageant which was exhibited on the occasion, a ghastly spectre made its

appearance in the form of a skeleton, as the King of Terrors is said to be represented. — Your worship is free to laugh at this, if you think it a proper subject for mirth; but men are alive who viewed it with their own eyes, and the event showed too well of what misfortunes this apparition was the singular prognostication."

"I have heard the story," said the knight, "but the monk who told it me, suggested that the figure, though unhappily chosen, was perhaps purposely introduced as a part of the pageant."

"I know not that," said the minstrel, drily; "but there is no doubt that shortly after this apparition King Alexander died, to the great sorrow of his people. The Maid of Norway, his heiress, speedily followed her grandfather to the grave, and our English king, Sir Knight, raked up a claim of dependency and homage due, he said, by Scotland, which neither the lawyers, nobles, priests, nor the very minstrels of Scotland had ever before heard of."

"Now, beshrew me," interrupted Sir Aymer de Valence, "this is beyond bargain. I agreed to hear your tale with patience, but I did not pledge myself that it should contain matter to the reproach of Edward the First, of blessed memory; nor will I permit his name to be mentioned in my hearing without the respect due to his high rank and noble qualities."

"Nay," said the minstrel, "I am no Highland bagpiper or genealogist, to carry respect for my art so far as to quarrel with a man of worship who stops me at the beginning of a pibroch. I am an Englishman, and wish dearly well to my country; and, above all, I must speak the truth. But I

will avoid disputable topics. Your age, sir though none of the ripest, authorises me to suppose you may have seen the battle of Falkirk, and other onslaughts in which the competition of Bruce and Baliol has been fiercely agitated, and you will permit me to say, that if the Scottish have not had the right upon their side, they have at least defended the wrong with the efforts of brave men and true."

"Of brave men, I grant you," said the knight, "for I have seen no cowards amongst them; but as for truth, they can best judge of it who know how often they have sworn faith to England, and how repeatedly they have broken their vow."

"I shall not stir the question," said the minstrel, "leaving it to your worship to determine which has most falsehood — he who compels a weaker person to take an unjust oath, or he who, compelled by necessity, takes the imposed oath without the intention of keeping his word."

"Nay, nay," said De Valence, "let us keep our opinions, for we are not likely to force each other from the faith we have adopted on this subject. But take my advice, and, whilst thou travellest under an English pennon, take heed that thou keepest off this conversation in the hall and kitchen, where perhaps the soldier may be less tolerant than the officer; and now, in a word, what is thy legend of this Dangerous Castle?"

"For that," replied Bertram, "methinks your worship is most likely to have a better edition than I, who have not been in this country for many years; but it is not for me to bandy opinions with your knightship. I will even proceed with the tale as I have heard it. I need not, I

presume, inform your worship that the Lords of Douglas, who founded this castle, are second to no lineage in Scotland in the antiquity of their descent. Nay, they have themselves boasted that their family is not to be seen or distinguished, like other great houses, until it is found at once in a certain degree of eminence. 'You may see us in the tree,' they say, 'you cannot discover us in the twig; you may see us in the stream, you cannot trace us to the fountain.' In a word, they deny that historians or genealogists can point out the first mean man named Douglas, who originally elevated the family; and true it is, that so far back as we have known this race, they have always been renowned for valour and enterprise, accompanied with the power which made that enterprise effectual."

"Enough," said the knight, "I have heard of the pride and power of that great family, nor does it interest me in the least to deny or detract from their bold claims to consideration in this respect."

"Without doubt you must also have heard, noble sir," replied the minstrel, "many things of James, the present heir of the House of Douglas?"

"More than enough," answered the English knight; "he is known to have been a stout supporter of that outlawed traitor, William Wallace; and again, upon the first raising of the banner by this Robert Bruce, who pretends to be King of Scotland, this young springald, James Douglas, must needs start into rebellion anew. He plunders his uncle, the Archbishop of St. Andrews,(*a*)[1] of

[1] See Editor's Notes at the end of the Volume. Wherever a similar reference occurs, the reader will understand that the same direction applies.

a considerable sum of money, to fill the Scottish Usurper's not overburdened treasury, debauches the servants of his relation, takes arms, and, though repeatedly chastised in the field, still keeps his vaunt, and threatens mischief to those who, in the name of his rightful sovereign, defend the Castle of Douglas Dale."

"It is your pleasure to say so, Sir Knight," replied Bertram; "yet I am sure, were you a Scot, you would with patience hear me tell over what has been said of this young man by those who have known him, and whose account of his adventures shows how differently the same tale may be told. These men talk of the present heir of this ancient family as fully adequate to maintain and augment its reputation; ready, indeed, to undergo every peril in the cause of Robert the Bruce, because the Bruce is esteemed by him his lawful king; and sworn and devoted, with such small strength as he can muster, to revenge himself on those Southrons who have, for several years, as he thinks, unjustly, possessed themselves of his father's abode."

"Oh," replied Sir Aymer de Valence, "we have heard much of his achievements in this respect, and of his threats against our governor and ourselves; yet we think it scarce likely that Sir John de Walton will move from Douglas Dale without the king's order, although this James Douglas, a mere chicken, take upon himself to crack his voice by crowing like a cock of the game."

"Sir," answered Bertram, "our acquaintance is but brief, and yet I feel it has been so beneficial to me, that I trust there is no harm in hoping that James Douglas and you may never meet in bodily

presence till the state of the two countries shall admit of peace being between you."

"Thou art obliging, friend," answered Sir Aymer, "and, I doubt not, sincere; and truly thou seemest to have a wholesome sense of the respect due to this young knight, when men talk of him in his native valley of Douglas. For me, I am only poor Aymer of Valence, without an acre of land, or much hope of acquiring any, unless I cut something huge with my broadsword out of the middle of these hills. Only this, good minstrel, if thou livest to tell my story, may I pray thee to use thy scrupulous custom of searching out the verity, and whether I live or die thou shalt not, I think, discover that thy late acquaintance of a spring morning hath added more to the laurels of James of Douglas, than any man's death must give to him by whose stronger arm, or more lucky chance, it is his lot to fall."

"I nothing fear you, Sir Knight," said the minstrel, "for yours is that happy brain, which, bold in youth as beseems a young knight, is in more advanced life the happy source of prudent counsel, of which I would not, by an early death, wish thy country to be deprived."

"Thou art so candid, then, as to wish Old England the benefit of good advice," said Sir Aymer, "though thou leanest to the side of Scotland in the controversy?"

"Assuredly, Sir Knight," said the minstrel, "since in wishing that Scotland and England each knew their own true interest, I am bound to wish them both alike well; and they should, I think, desire to live in friendship together. Occupying each their own portion of the same island, and

living under the same laws, and being at peace with each other, they might, without fear, face the enmity of the whole world."

"If thy faith be so liberal," answered the knight, "as becomes a good man, thou must certainly pray, Sir Minstrel, for the success of England in the war, by which alone these murderous hostilities of the Northern nation can end in a solid peace. The rebellions of this obstinate country are but the struggles of the stag when he is mortally wounded; the animal grows weaker and weaker with every struggle, till his resistance is effectually tamed by the hand of death."

"Not so, Sir Knight," said the minstrel; "if my creed is well taught me, we ought not so to pray. We may, without offence, intimate in our prayers the end we wish to obtain; but it is not for us, poor mortals, to point out to an all-seeing Providence the precise manner in which our petitions are to be accomplished, or to wish the downfall of a country to end its commotions, as the death-stab terminates the agonies of the wounded stag. Whether I appeal to my heart or to my understanding, the dictate would be to petition Heaven for what is just and equal in the case; and if I should fear for thee, Sir Knight, in an encounter with James of Douglas, it is only because he upholds, as I conceive, the better side of the debate; and powers more than earthly have presaged to him success."

"Do you tell me so, Sir Minstrel," said De Valence in a threatening tone, "knowing me and my office!"

"Your personal dignity and authority," said Bertram, "cannot change the right into wrong, or

avert what Providence has decreed to take place. You know, I must presume, that the Douglas hath, by various devices, already contrived to make himself master of this Castle of Douglas three several times, and that Sir John de Walton, the present governor, holds it with a garrison trebled in force, and under the assurance that if, without surprise, he should keep it from the Scottish power for a year and a day, he shall obtain the barony of Douglas, with its extensive appendages, in free property for his reward; while, on the other hand, if he shall suffer the fortress during this space to be taken, either by guile or by open force, as has happened successively to the holders of the Dangerous Castle, he will become liable to dishonour as a knight, and to attainder as a subject; and the chiefs who take share with him, and serve under him, will participate also in his guilt and his punishment?"

"All this I know well," said Sir Aymer; "and I only wonder that, having become public, the conditions have, nevertheless, been told with so much accuracy; but what has this to do with the issue of the combat, if the Douglas and I should chance to meet? I will not surely be disposed to fight with less animation because I wear my fortune upon my sword, or become coward because I fight for a portion of the Douglas's estate, as well as for fame and for fatherland? And after all" ——

"Hear me," said the minstrel; "an ancient gleeman has said, that in a false quarrel there is no true valour, and the *los* or praise won therein is, when balanced against honest fame, as valueless as a wreath formed out of copper, compared to

a chaplet of pure gold; but I bid you not take me for thy warrant in this important question. Thou well knowest how James of Thirlwall, the last English commander before Sir John de Walton, was surprised, and the castle sacked with circumstances of great inhumanity."

"Truly," said Sir Aymer, "I think that Scotland and England both have heard of that onslaught, and of the disgusting proceedings of the Scottish chieftain, when he caused transport into the wild forest gold, silver, ammunition, and armour, and all things that could be easily removed, and destroyed a large quantity of provisions, in a manner equally savage and unheard of."

"Perhaps, Sir Knight," said Bertram, "you were yourself an eyewitness of that transaction, which has been spoken of far and wide, and is called the Douglas Larder?"

"I saw not the actual accomplishment of the deed," said De Valence; "that is, I witnessed it not a-doing, but I beheld enough of the sad relics to make the Douglas Larder never by me to be forgotten as a record of horror and abomination. I would speak it truly, by the hand of my father and by my honour as a knight! and I will leave it to thee to judge whether it was a deed calculated to secure the smiles of Heaven in favour of the actors. This is my edition of the story:—

"A large quantity of provisions had during two years or thereabouts been collected from different points, and the Castle of Douglas, newly repaired, and, as was thought, carefully guarded, was appointed as the place where the said provisions were to be put in store for the service of the King of England, or of the Lord Clifford, whichever

should first enter the Western Marches with an English army, and stand in need of such a supply. This army was also to relieve our wants, I mean those of my uncle the Earl of Pembroke, who for some time before had lain with a considerable force in the town called Ayr, near the old Caledonian Forest, and where we had hot wars with the insurgent Scots. Well, sir, it happened, as in similar cases, that Thirlwall, though a bold and active soldier, was surprised in the Castle of Douglas, about Hallowmass, by this same worthy, young James Douglas. In no very good humour was he, as you may suppose; for his father, called William the Hardy, or William Longlegs, having refused, on any terms, to become Anglocised, was made a lawful prisoner, and died as such, closely confined in Berwick, or, as some say, in Newcastle. The news of his father's death had put young Douglas into no small rage, and tended, I think, to suggest what he did in his resentment. Embarrassed by the quantity of provisions which he found in the castle, which, the English being superior in the country, he had neither the means to remove nor the leisure to stay and consume, the fiend, as I think, inspired him with a contrivance to render them unfit for human use. You shall judge yourself whether it was likely to be suggested by a good or an evil spirit.

"According to this device, the gold, silver, and other transportable commodities being carried to secret places of safety, Douglas caused the meat, the malt, and other corn or grain, to be brought down into the castle cellar, where he emptied the contents of the sacks into one loathsome heap, striking out the heads of the barrels and puncheons,

so as to let the mingled drink run through the heap of meal, grain, and so forth. The bullocks provided for slaughter were in like manner knocked on the head, and their blood suffered to drain into the mass of edible substances; and lastly, the flesh of these oxen was buried in the same mass, in which was also included the dead bodies of those in the castle, who, receiving no quarter from the Douglas, paid dear enough for having kept no better watch. This base and unworthy abuse of provisions intended for the use of man, together with throwing into the well of the castle carcasses of men and horses, and other filth for polluting the same, has since that time been called the DOUGLAS LARDER."

"I pretend not, good Sir Aymer," said the minstrel, "to vindicate what you justly reprove, nor can I conceive any mode of rendering provisions arranged after the form of the Douglas Larder, proper for the use of any Christian; yet this young gentleman might perhaps act under the sting of natural resentment, rendering his singular exploit more excusable than it may seem at first. Think, if your own noble father had just died in a lingering captivity, his inheritance seized upon, and occupied as a garrison by a foreign enemy, would not these things stir you to a mode of resentment which in cold blood, and judging of it as the action of an enemy, your honour might hold in natural and laudable abhorrence? — Would you pay respect to dead and senseless objects, which no one could blame your appropriating to your own use, or even scruple the refusal of quarter to prisoners, which is so often practised even in wars which are otherwise termed fair and humane?"

"You press me close, minstrel," said Aymer de Valence. "I at least have no great interest to excuse the Douglas in this matter, since its consequences were, that I myself, and the rest of my uncle's host, laboured with Clifford and his army to rebuild this same Dangerous Castle; and feeling no stomach for the cheer that the Douglas had left us, we suffered hard commons, though I acknowledge we did not hesitate to adopt for our own use such sheep and oxen as the miserable Scots had still left around their farm-houses; and I jest not, Sir Minstrel, when I acknowledge in sad earnest that we martial men ought to make our petitions with peculiar penitence to Heaven for mercy, when we reflect on the various miseries which the nature of our profession compels us to inflict upon each other."

"It seems to me," answered the minstrel, "that those who feel the stings of their own conscience should be more lenient when they speak of the offences of others; nor do I greatly rely on a sort of prophecy which was delivered, as the men of this hill district say, to the young Douglas, by a man who in the course of nature should have been long since dead, promising him a course of success against the English for having sacrificed his own castle to prevent their making it a garrison."

"We have time enough for the story," said Sir Aymer, "and methinks it would suit a knight and a minstrel better than the grave converse we have hitherto held, which would have beseemed — so God save me — the mouths of two travelling friars."

"So be it," said the minstrel; "the rote or the viol easily changes its time and varies its note."

CHAPTER V.

A tale of sorrow, for your eyes may weep;
A tale of horror, for your flesh may tingle;
A tale of wonder, for the eyebrows arch,
And the flesh curdles if you read it rightly.

Old Play.

"YOUR honour must be informed, gentle Sir Aymer de Valence, that I have heard this story told at a great distance from the land in which it happened, by a sworn minstrel, the ancient friend and servant of the House of Douglas, one of the best, it is said, who ever belonged to that noble family. This minstrel, Hugo Hugonet by name, attended his young master when on this fierce exploit, as was his wont.

"The castle was in total tumult; in one corner the war-men were busy breaking up and destroying provisions; in another, they were slaying men, horses, and cattle, and these actions were accompanied with appropriate sounds. The cattle, particularly, had become sensible of their impending fate, and, with awkward resistance and piteous cries, testified that reluctance with which these poor creatures look instinctively on the shambles. The groans and screams of men, undergoing, or about to undergo, the stroke of death, and the screeches of the poor horses which were in mortal agony, formed a fearful chorus. Hugonet was desirous to remove himself from such unpleasant sights and sounds; but his master, the Douglas,

had been a man of some reading, and his old servant was anxious to secure a book of poetry, to which he had been attached of old. This contained the Lays of an ancient Scottish Bard, who, if an ordinary human creature while he was in this life, cannot now perhaps be exactly termed such.

"He was, in short, that Thomas, distinguished by the name of the Rhymer,(*b*) and whose intimacy, it is said, became so great with the gifted people, called the Faëry folk, that he could, like them, foretell the future deed before it came to pass, and united in his own person the quality of bard and of soothsayer. But of late years he had vanished almost entirely from this mortal scene; and although the time and manner of his death were never publicly known, yet the general belief was, that he was not severed from the land of the living, but removed to the land of Faëry, from whence he sometimes made excursions, and concerned himself only about matters which were to come hereafter. Hugonet was the more earnest to prevent the loss of the works of this ancient bard, as many of his poems and predictions were said to be preserved in the castle, and were supposed to contain much especially connected with the old House of Douglas, as well as other families of ancient descent, who had been subjects of this old man's prophecy; and accordingly he determined to save this volume from destruction in the general conflagration to which the building was about to be consigned by the heir of its ancient proprietors. With this view he hurried up into the little old vaulted room, called 'the Douglas's study,' in which there might be some dozen old books

written by the ancient chaplains, in what the minstrels call *the letter black*. He immediately discovered the celebrated lay, called Sir Tristrem, which has been so often altered and abridged as to bear little resemblance to the original. Hugonet, who well knew the value in which this poem was held by the ancient lords of the castle, took the parchment volume from the shelves of the library, and laid it upon a small desk adjacent to the Baron's chair. Having made such preparation for putting it in safety, he fell into a brief reverie, in which the decay of light, and the preparations for the Douglas Larder, but especially the last sight of objects which had been familiar to his eyes, now on the eve of destruction, engaged him at that moment.

"The bard, therefore, was thinking within himself upon the uncommon mixture of the mystical scholar and warrior in his old master, when, as he bent his eyes upon the book of the ancient Rhymer, he was astonished to observe it slowly removed from the desk on which it lay by an invisible hand. The old man looked with horror at the spontaneous motion of the book, for the safety of which he was interested, and had the courage to approach a little nearer the table, in order to discover by what means it had been withdrawn.

"I have said the room was already becoming dark, so as to render it difficult to distinguish any person in the chair, though it now appeared, on closer examination, that a kind of shadowy outline of a human form was seated in it, but neither precise enough to convey its exact figure to the mind, nor so detailed as to intimate distinctly its mode of action. The Bard of Douglas, therefore,

gazed upon the object of his fear, as if he had looked upon something not mortal; nevertheless, as he gazed more intently, he became more capable of discovering the object which offered itself to his eyes, and they grew by degrees more keen to penetrate what they witnessed. A tall thin form, attired in, or rather shaded with, a long flowing dusky robe, having a face and physiognomy so wild and overgrown with hair as to be hardly human, were the only marked outlines of the phantom; and, looking more attentively, Hugonet was still sensible of two other forms, the outlines, it seemed, of a hart and a hind, which appeared half to shelter themselves behind the person and under the robe of this supernatural figure."

"A probable tale," said the knight, "for you, Sir Minstrel, a man of sense as you seem to be, to recite so gravely! From what wise authority have you had this tale, which, though it might pass well enough amid clanging beakers, must be held quite apocryphal in the sober hours of the morning?"

"By my minstrel word, Sir Knight," answered Bertram, "I am no propagator of the fable, if it be one; Hugonet, the violer, when he had retired into a cloister near the Lake of Pembelmere in Wales, communicated the story to me as I now tell it. Therefore, as it was upon the authority of an eyewitness, I apologise not for relating it to you, since I could hardly discover a more direct source of knowledge."

"Be it so, Sir Minstrel," said the knight; "tell on thy tale, and may thy legend escape criticism from others as well as from me."

"Hugonet, Sir Knight," answered Bertram, "was

a holy man, and maintained a fair character during his whole life, notwithstanding his trade may be esteemed a light one. The vision spoke to him in an antique language, like that formerly used in the kingdom of Strath-Clyde, being a species of Scots or Gaelic, which few would have comprehended.

"'You are a learned man,' said the apparition, 'and not unacquainted with the dialects used in your country formerly, although they are now out of date, and you are obliged to translate them into the vulgar Saxon of Deira or Northumberland; but highly must an ancient British bard prize one in this "remote term of time," who sets upon the poetry of his native country a value which invites him to think of its preservation at a moment of such terror as influences the present evening.'

"'It is, indeed,' said Hugonet, 'a night of terror, that calls even the dead from the grave, and makes them the ghastly and fearful companions of the living — Who or what art thou, in God's name, who breakest the bounds which divide them, and revisitest thus strangely the state thou hast so long bid adieu to?'

"'I am,' replied the vision, 'that celebrated Thomas the Rhymer, by some called Thomas of Erceldoun, or Thomas the True Speaker. Like other sages, I am permitted at times to revisit the scenes of my former life, nor am I incapable of removing the shadowy clouds and darkness which overhang futurity; and know, thou afflicted man, that what thou now seest in this woful country is not a general emblem of what shall therein befall hereafter, but in proportion as the Douglases are now suffering the loss and destruction of their home for

their loyalty to the rightful heir of the Scottish kingdom, so hath Heaven appointed for them a just reward; and as they have not spared to burn and destroy their own house and that of their fathers in the Bruce's cause, so is it the doom of Heaven, that as often as the walls of Douglas Castle shall be burnt to the ground, they shall be again rebuilt still more stately and more magnificent than before.'

"A cry was now heard like that of a multitude in the courtyard, joining in a fierce shout of exultation; at the same time a broad and ruddy glow seemed to burst from the beams and rafters, and sparks flew from them as from the smith's stithy, while the element caught to its fuel, and the conflagration broke its way through every aperture.

"'See ye that?' said the vision, casting his eye towards the windows, and disappearing. — 'Begone! The fated hour of removing this book is not yet come, nor are thine the destined hands. But it will be safe where I have placed it, and the time of its removal shall come.' The voice was heard after the form had vanished, and the brain of Hugonet almost turned round at the wild scene which he beheld; his utmost exertion was scarcely sufficient to withdraw him from the terrible spot, and Douglas Castle that night sank into ashes and smoke, to arise, in no great length of time, in a form stronger than ever." The minstrel stopped, and his hearer, the English knight, remained silent for some minutes, ere at length he replied.

"It is true, minstrel," answered Sir Aymer, "that your tale is so far undeniable, that this castle — three times burned down by the heir of

the house and of the barony — has hitherto been as often reared again by Henry Lord Clifford, and other generals of the English, who endeavoured on every occasion to build it up more artificially and more strongly than it had formerly existed, since it occupies a position too important to the safety of our Scottish border to permit our yielding it up. This I myself have partly witnessed. But I cannot think that, because the castle has been so destroyed, it is therefore decreed so to be repaired in future, considering that such cruelties, as surely cannot meet the approbation of Heaven, have attended the feats of the Douglases. But I see thou art determined to keep thine own faith, nor can I blame thee, since the wonderful turns of fate which have attended this fortress are sufficient to warrant any one to watch for what seem the peculiar indications of the will of Heaven; but thou mayst believe, good minstrel, that the fault shall not be mine, if the young Douglas shall have opportunity to exercise his cookery upon a second edition of his family larder, or to profit by the predictions of Thomas the Rhymer."

"I do not doubt due circumspection upon your own part and Sir John de Walton's," said Bertram: "but there is no crime in my saying that Heaven can accomplish its own purposes. I look upon Douglas Castle as in some degree a fated place, and I long to see what changes time may have made in it during the currency of twenty years. Above all, I desire to secure, if possible, the volume of this Thomas of Erceldoun, having in it such a fund of forgotten minstrelsy, and of prophecies respecting the future fates of the British kingdom, both northern and southern."

The knight made no answer, but rode a little space forward, keeping the upper part of the ridge of the water, by which the road down the vale seemed to be rather sharply conducted. It at length attained the summit of an acclivity of considerable length. From this point, and behind a conspicuous rock, which appeared to have been pushed aside, as it were, like the scene of a theatre, to admit a view of the under part of the valley, the travellers beheld the extensive vale, parts of which have been already shown in detail, but which, as the river became narrower, was now entirely laid bare in its height and depth as far as it extended, and displayed in its precincts, at a little distance from the course of the stream, the towering and lordly castle to which it gave the name. The mist which continued to incumber the valley with its fleecy clouds showed imperfectly the rude fortifications which served to defend the small town of Douglas, which was strong enough to repel a desultory attack, but not to withstand what was called in those days a formal siege. The most striking feature was its church, an ancient Gothic pile raised on an eminence in the centre of the town, and even then extremely ruinous. To the left, and lying in the distance, might be seen other towers and battlements; and, divided from the town by a piece of artificial water, which extended almost around it, arose the Dangerous Castle of Douglas.(*c*)

Sternly was it fortified, after the fashion of the middle ages, with donjon and battlements; displaying, above others, the tall tower, which bore the name of Lord Henry's, or the Clifford's Tower.

"Yonder is the castle," said Aymer de Valence,

extending his arm, with a smile of triumph upon his brow; "thou mayst judge thyself, whether the defences added to it under the Clifford are likely to render its next capture a more easy deed than the last."

The minstrel (*d*) barely shook his head, and quoted from the Psalmist — "*Nisi Dominus custodiet.*" Nor did he prosecute the discourse, though De Valence answered eagerly, "My own edition of the text is not very different from thine; but, methinks, thou art more spiritually minded than can always be predicated of a wandering minstrel."

"God knows," said Bertram, "that if I, or such as I, are forgetful of the finger of Providence in accomplishing its purposes in this lower world, we have heavier blame than that of other people, since we are perpetually called upon, in the exercise of our fanciful profession, to admire the turns of fate which bring good out of evil, and which render those who think only of their own passions and purposes the executors of the will of Heaven."

"I do submit to what you say, Sir Minstrel," answered the knight, "and it would be unlawful to express any doubt of the truths which you speak so solemnly, any more than of your own belief in them. Let me add, sir, that I think I have power enough in this garrison to bid you welcome, and Sir John de Walton, I hope, will not refuse access to hall, castle, or knight's bower, to a person of your profession, and by whose conversation we shall, perhaps, profit somewhat. I cannot, however, lead you to expect such indulgence for your son, considering the present state of his health; but if I procure him the privilege to

remain at the convent of St. Bride, he will be there unmolested and in safety, until you have renewed your acquaintance with Douglas Dale and its history, and are disposed to set forward on your journey."

"I embrace your honour's proposal the more willingly," said the minstrel, "that I can recompense the Father Abbot."

"A main point with holy men or women," replied De Valence, "who, in time of warfare, subsist by affording the visitors of their shrine the means of maintenance in their cloisters for a passing season."

The party now approached the sentinels on guard at the castle, who were closely and thickly stationed, and who respectfully admitted Sir Aymer de Valence, as next in command under Sir John de Walton. Fabian — for so was the young squire named who attended on De Valence — mentioned it as his master's pleasure that the minstrel should also be admitted.

An old archer, however, looked hard at the minstrel as he followed Sir Aymer. "It is not for us," said he, "or any of our degree, to oppose the pleasure of Sir Aymer de Valence, nephew to the Earl of Pembroke, in such a matter; and for us, Master Fabian, welcome are you to make the gleeman your companion both at bed and board, as well as your visitant, a week or two at the Castle of Douglas; but your worship is well aware of the strict order of watch laid upon us, and if Solomon, King of Israel, were to come here as a travelling minstrel, by my faith I durst not give him entrance, unless I had positive authority from Sir John de Walton."

"Do you doubt, sirrah," said Sir Aymer de Valence, who returned on hearing an altercation betwixt Fabian and the archer — "do you doubt that I have good authority to entertain a guest, or do you presume to contest it?"

"Heaven forbid!" said the old man, "that I should presume to place my own desire in opposition to your worship, who has so lately and so honourably acquired your spurs: but in this matter I must think what will be the wish of Sir John de Walton, who is your governor, Sir Knight, as well as mine; and so far I hold it worth while to detain your guest until Sir John return from a ride to the outposts of the castle; and this, I conceive, being my duty, will be no matter of offence to your worship."

"Methinks," said the knight, "it is saucy in thee to suppose that my commands can have anything in them improper, or contradictory to those of Sir John de Walton; thou mayst trust to me at least that thou shalt come to no harm. Keep this man in the guard-room; let him not want good cheer, and when Sir John de Walton returns, report him as a person admitted by my invitation, and if anything more be wanted to make out your excuse, I shall not be reluctant in stating it to the governor."

The archer made a signal of obedience with the pike which he held in his hand, and resumed the grave and solemn manner of a sentinel upon his post. He first, however, ushered in the minstrel, and furnished him with food and liquor, speaking at the same time to Fabian, who remained behind. The smart young stripling had become very proud of late, in consequence of obtaining the name of

Sir Aymer's squire, and advancing a step in chivalry, as Sir Aymer himself had, somewhat earlier than the usual period, been advanced from squire to knight.

"I tell thee, Fabian," said the old archer (whose gravity, sagacity, and skill in his vocation, while they gained him the confidence of all in the castle, subjected him, as he himself said, occasionally to the ridicule of the young coxcombs; and at the same time, we may add, rendered him somewhat pragmatic and punctilious towards those who stood higher than himself in birth and rank) — "I tell thee, Fabian, thou wilt do thy master, Sir Aymer, good service, if thou wilt give him a hint to suffer an old archer, man-at-arms, or such like, to give him a fair and civil answer respecting that which he commands; for undoubtedly it is not in the first score of a man's years that he learns the various proper forms of military service; and Sir John de Walton, a most excellent commander no doubt, is one earnestly bent on pursuing the strict line of his duty, and will be rigorously severe, as well, believe me, with thy master as with a lesser person. Nay, he also possesses that zeal for his duty which induces him to throw blame, if there be the slightest ground for it, upon Aymer de Valence himself, although his uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, was Sir John de Walton's steady patron, and laid the beginning of his good fortune; for all which, by training up his nephew in the true discipline of the French wars, Sir John has taken the best way of showing himself grateful to the old Earl."

"Be it as you will, old Gilbert Greenleaf," answered Fabian, "thou knowest I never quarrel with thy sermonising, and therefore give me credit

for submitting to many a lecture from Sir John de Walton and thyself; but thou drivest this a little too far, if thou canst not let a day pass without giving me a flogging. Credit me, Sir John de Walton will not thank thee, if thou term him one too old to remember that he himself had once some green sap in his veins. Ay, thus it is, the old man will not forget that he has once been young, nor the young that he must some day be old; and so the one changes his manners into the lingering formality of advanced age, and the other remains like a midsummer torrent swollen with rain, every drop of water in it noise, froth, and overflow. There is a maxim for thee, Gilbert! — Heardest thou ever better? Hang it up amidst thy axioms of wisdom, and see if it will not pass among them like fifteen to the dozen. It will serve to bring thee off, man, when the wine-pot (thine only fault, good Gilbert) hath brought thee on occasion into something of a scrape."

"Best keep it for thyself, good Sir Squire," said the old man; "methinks it is more like to stand thyself one day in good stead. Who ever heard of a knight, or of the wood of which a knight is made, and that is a squire, being punished corporally like a poor old archer or horseboy? Your worst fault will be mended by some of these witty sayings, and your best service will scarce be rewarded more thankfully than by giving thee the name of Fabian the Fabler, or some such witty title."

Having unloosed his repartee to this extent, old Greenleaf resumed a certain acidity of countenance, which may be said to characterise those whose preferment hath become frozen under the influence of the slowness of its progress, and who

display a general spleen against such as have obtained the advancement for which all are struggling, earlier, and, as they suppose, with less merit than their own. From time to time the eye of the old sentinel stole from the top of his pike, and with an air of triumph rested upon the young man Fabian, as if to see how deeply the wound had galled him, while at the same time he held himself on the alert to perform whatever mechanical duty his post might require. Both Fabian and his master were at the happy period of life when such discontent as that of the grave archer affected them lightly, and, at the very worst, was considered as the jest of an old man and a good soldier; the more especially, as he was always willing to do the duty of his companions, and was much trusted by Sir John de Walton, who, though very much younger, had been bred up like Greenleaf in the wars of Edward the First, and was tenacious in upholding strict discipline, which, since the death of that great monarch, had been considerably neglected by the young and warm-blooded valour of England.

Meantime it occurred to Sir Aymer de Valence, that though, in displaying the usual degree of hospitality shown to such a man as Bertram, he had merely done what was becoming his own rank, as one possessed of the highest honours of chivalry, the self-styled minstrel might not in reality be a man of that worth which he assumed. There was certainly something in his conversation, at least more grave, if not more austere, than was common to those of his calling; and when he recollected many points of Sir John de Walton's minuteness, a doubt arose in his mind, that the

governor might not approve of his having introduced into the castle a person of Bertram's character, who was capable of making observations from which the garrison might afterwards feel much danger and inconvenience. Secretly, therefore, he regretted that he had not fairly intimated to the wandering minstrel, that his reception, or that of any stranger, within the Dangerous Castle was not at present permitted by the circumstances of the times. In this case, the express line of his duty would have been his vindication, and instead, perhaps, of discountenance and blame, he would have had praise and honour from his superior.

With these thoughts passing through his mind, some tacit apprehension arose of a rebuke on the part of his commanding officer; for this officer, notwithstanding his strictness, Sir Aymer loved as well as feared. He went, therefore, towards the guard-room of the castle, under the pretence of seeing that the rites of hospitality had been duly observed towards his late travelling-companion. The minstrel arose respectfully, and from the manner in which he paid his compliments, seemed, if he had not expected this call of inquiry, at least to be in no degree surprised at it. Sir Aymer, on the other hand, assumed an air something more distant than he had yet used towards Bertram, and in reverting to his former invitation he now so far qualified it as to say that the minstrel knew that he was only second in command, and that effectual permission to enter the castle ought to be sanctioned by Sir John de Walton.

There is a civil way of seeming to believe any apology which people are disposed to receive in payment, without alleging suspicion of its cur-

rency. The minstrel, therefore, tendered his thanks for the civility which had so far been shown to him. "It was a mere wish of passing curiosity," he said, "which, if not granted, could be attended with no consequences either inconvenient or disagreeable to him. Thomas of Erceldoun was, according to the Welsh triads, *one of the three bards of Britain*, who never stained a spear with blood, or was guilty either of taking or retaking castles and fortresses, and thus far not a person likely, after death, to be suspected of such warlike feats. But I can easily conceive why Sir John de Walton should have allowed the usual rites of hospitality to fall into disuse, and why a man of public character like myself ought not to desire food or lodging where it is accounted so dangerous; and it can surprise no one why the governor did not even invest his worthy young lieutenant with the power of dispensing with so strict and unusual a rule."

These words, very coolly spoken, had something of the effect of affronting the young knight, as insinuating that he was not held sufficiently trustworthy by Sir John de Walton, with whom he had lived on terms of affection and familiarity, though the governor had attained his thirtieth year and upwards, and his lieutenant did not yet write himself one-and-twenty, the full age of chivalry having been in his case particularly dispensed with, owing to a feat of early manhood. Ere he had fully composed the angry thoughts which were chafing in his mind, the sound of a hunting-bugle was heard at the gate, and, from the sort of general stir which it spread through the garrison, it was plain that the governor had returned from his ride. Every sentinel, seemingly animated by his pre-

sence, shouldered his pike more uprightly, gave the word of the post more sharply, and seemed more fully awake and conscious of his duty. Sir John de Walton, having alighted from his horse, asked Greenleaf what had passed during his absence. The old archer thought it his duty to say that a minstrel, who seemed like a Scotchman, or wandering borderer, had been admitted into the castle, while his son, a lad sick of the pestilence so much talked of, had been left for a time at the Abbey of St. Bride. This he said on Fabian's information. The archer added, that the father was a man of tale and song, who could keep the whole garrison amused, without giving them leave to attend to their own business.

"We want no such devices to pass the time," answered the governor; "and we would have been better satisfied if our lieutenant had been pleased to find us other guests, and fitter for a direct and frank communication, than one who, by his profession, is a detractor of God and a deceiver of man."

"Yet," said the old soldier, who could hardly listen even to his commander without indulging the humour of contradiction, "I have heard your honour intimate that the trade of a minstrel, when it is justly acted up to, is as worthy as even the degree of knighthood itself."

"Such it may have been in former days," answered the knight; "but in modern minstrelsy, the duty of rendering the art an incentive to virtue is forgotten, and it is well if the poetry which fired our fathers to noble deeds does not now push on their children to such as are base and unworthy. But I will speak upon this to my friend Aymer,

than whom I do not know a more excellent or a more high-spirited young man."

While discoursing with the archer in this manner, Sir John de Walton, of a tall and handsome figure, advanced and stood within the ample arch of the guard-room chimney, and was listened to in reverential silence by trusty Gilbert, who filled up with nods and signs, as an attentive auditor, the pauses in the conversation. The conduct of another hearer of what passed was not equally respectful, but, from his position, he escaped observation.

This third person was no other than the squire Fabian, who was concealed from observation by his position behind the hob, or projecting portion of the old-fashioned fireplace, and hid himself yet more carefully when he heard the conversation between the governor and the archer turn to the prejudice, as he thought, of his master. The squire's employment at this time was the servile task of cleaning Sir Aymer's arms, which was conveniently performed by heating, upon the projection already specified, the pieces of steel armour for the usual thin coating of varnish. He could not, therefore, if he should be discovered, be considered as guilty of anything insolent or disrespectful. He was better screened from view, as a thick smoke arose from a quantity of oak panelling, carved in many cases with the crest and achievements of the Douglas family, which, being the fuel nearest at hand, lay smouldering in the chimney, and gathering to a blaze.

The governor, unconscious of this addition to his audience, pursued his conversation with Gilbert Greenleaf. "I need not tell you," he said, "that

I am interested in the speedy termination of this siege or blockade, with which Douglas continues to threaten us; my own honour and affections are engaged in keeping this Dangerous Castle safe in England's behalf, but I am troubled at the admission of this stranger; and young De Valence would have acted more strictly in the line of his duty, if he had refused to this wanderer any communication with this garrison without my permission."

"Pity it is," replied old Greenleaf, shaking his head, "that this good-natured and gallant young knight is somewhat drawn aside by the rash advices of his squire, the boy Fabian, who has bravery, but as little steadiness in him as a bottle of fermented small beer."

"Now hang thee," thought Fabian to himself, "for an old relic of the wars, stuffed full of conceit and warlike terms, like the soldier who, to keep himself from the cold, has lapped himself so close in a tattered ensign for a shelter, that his very outside may show nothing but rags and blazonry."

"I would not think twice of the matter, were the party less dear to me," said Sir John de Walton. "But I would fain be of use to this young man, even although I should purchase his improvement in military knowledge at the expense of giving him a little pain. Experience should, as it were, be burnt in upon the mind of a young man, and not merely impressed by marking the lines of his chart out for him with chalk; I will remember the hint you, Greenleaf, have given, and take an opportunity of severing these two young men; and though I most dearly love the one, and am far from wishing ill to the other, yet at present, as you well hint, the blind is leading

the blind, and the young knight has for his assistant and counsellor too young a squire, and that must be amended."

"Marry! out upon thee, old palmer-worm!" said the page within himself. "Have I found thee in the very fact of maligning myself and my master, as it is thy nature to do towards all the hopeful young buds of chivalry? If it were not to dirty the arms of an *élève* of chivalry, by measuring them with one of thy rank, I might honour thee with a knightly invitation to the field, while the scandal which thou hast spoken is still foul upon thy tongue; as it is, thou shalt not carry one kind of language publicly in the castle, and another before the governor, upon the footing of having served with him under the banner of Longshanks. I will carry to my master this tale of thine evil intentions; and when we have concerted together, it shall appear whether the youthful spirits of the garrison or the grey beards are most likely to be the hope and protection of this same Castle of Douglas."

It is enough to say that Fabian pursued his purpose, in carrying to his master, and in no very good humour, the report of what had passed between Sir John de Walton and the old soldier. He succeeded in representing the whole as a formal offence intended to Sir Aymer de Valence; while all that the governor did to remove the suspicions entertained by the young knight could not in any respect bring him to take a kindly view of the feelings of his commander towards him. He retained the impression which he had formed from Fabian's recital of what he had heard, and did not think he was doing Sir John de Walton any

injustice, in supposing him desirous to engross the greatest share of the fame acquired in the defence of the castle, and thrusting back his companions, who might reasonably pretend to a fair portion of it.

The mother of mischief, says a Scottish proverb, is no bigger than a midge's wing.[1] In this matter of quarrel, neither the young man nor the older knight had afforded each other any just cause of offence. De Walton was a strict observer of military discipline, in which he had been educated from his extreme youth, and by which he was almost as completely ruled as by his natural disposition; and his present situation added force to his original education.

Common report had even exaggerated the military skill, the love of adventure, and the great variety of enterprise, ascribed to James, the young Lord of Douglas. He had, in the eyes of this Southern garrison, the faculties of a fiend, rather than those of a mere mortal; for if the English soldiers cursed the tedium of the perpetual watch and ward upon the Dangerous Castle, which admitted of no relaxation from the severity of extreme duty, they agreed that a tall form was sure to appear to them with a battle-axe in his hand, and entering into conversation in the most insinuating manner, never failed, with an ingenuity and eloquence equal to that of a fallen spirit, to recommend to the discontented sentinel some mode in which, by giving his assistance to betray the English, he might set himself at liberty. The variety of these devices, and the frequency of their recurrence, kept Sir John de Walton's anxiety so

[1] *i.e.* Gnat's wing.

perpetually upon the stretch, that he at no time thought himself exactly out of the Black Douglas's reach, any more than the good Christian supposes himself out of reach of the wiles of the devil; while every new temptation, instead of confirming his hope, seems to announce that the immediate retreat of the Evil One will be followed by some new attack yet more cunningly devised. Under this general state of anxiety and apprehension, the temper of the governor changed somewhat for the worse, and they who loved him best regretted most that he became addicted to complain of the want of diligence on the part of those who, neither invested with responsibility like his, nor animated by the hope of such splendid rewards, did not entertain the same degree of watchful and incessant suspicion as himself. The soldiers muttered that the vigilance of their governor was marked with severity; the officers and men of rank, of whom there were several, as the castle was a renowned school of arms, and there was a certain merit attained even by serving within its walls, complained, at the same time, that Sir John de Walton no longer made parties for hunting, for hawking, or for any purpose which might soften the rigours of warfare, and suffered nothing to go forward but the precise discipline of the castle. On the other hand, it may be usually granted, that the castle is well kept where the governor is a disciplinarian; and where feuds and personal quarrels are found in the garrison, the young men are usually more in fault than those whose greater experience has convinced them of the necessity of using the strictest precautions.

A generous mind - - and such was Sir John de

Walton's — is often in this way changed and corrupted by the habit of over-vigilance, and pushed beyond its natural limits of candour. Neither was Sir Aymer de Valence free from a similar change; suspicion, though from a different cause, seemed also to threaten to bias his open and noble disposition, in those qualities which had hitherto been proper to him. It was in vain that Sir John de Walton studiously sought opportunities to give his younger friend indulgences, which at times were as far extended as the duty of the garrison permitted. The blow was struck; the alarm had been given to a proud and fiery temper on both sides; and while De Valence entertained an opinion that he was unjustly suspected by a friend, who was in several respects bound to him, De Walton, on the other hand, was led to conceive that a young man, of whom he took a charge as affectionate as if he had been a son of his own, and who owed to his lessons what he knew of warfare, and what success he had obtained in life, had taken offence at trifles, and considered himself ill treated on very inadequate grounds. The seeds of disagreement, thus sown between them, failed not, like the tares sown by the Enemy among the wheat, to pass from one class of the garrison to another; the soldiers, though without any better reason than merely to pass the time, took different sides between their governor and his young lieutenant; and so the ball of contention being once thrown up between them, never lacked some arm or other to keep it in motion.

CHAPTER VI.

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
  And life is thorny, and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
  Doth work like madness in the brain.
. . . . . .
Each spoke words of high disdain.
And insult to his heart's dear brother,
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
  Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
  But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Christabelle of COLERIDGE.

IN prosecution of the intention which, when his blood was cool, seemed to him wisest, Sir John de Walton resolved that he would go to the verge of indulgence with his lieutenant and his young officers, furnish them with every species of amusement which the place rendered possible, and make them ashamed of their discontent, by overloading them with courtesy. The first time, therefore, that he saw Aymer de Valence after his return to the castle, he addressed him in high spirits, whether real or assumed.

"What thinkest thou, my young friend," said De Walton, "if we try some of the woodland

sports proper, they say, to this country? There are still in our neighbourhood some herds of the Caledonian breed of wild cattle, which are nowhere to be found except among the moorlands — the black and rugged frontier of what was anciently called the Kingdom of Strath-Clyde. There are some hunters, too, who have been accustomed to the sport, and who vouch that these animals are by far the most bold and fierce subjects of chase in the island of Britain."

"You will do as you please," replied Sir Aymer, coldly; "but it is not I, Sir John, who would recommend, for the sake of a hunting-match, that you should involve the whole garrison in danger; you know best the responsibilities incurred by your office here, and no doubt must have heedfully attended to them before making a proposal of such a nature."

"I do indeed know my own duty," replied De Walton, offended in turn, "and might be allowed to think of yours also, without assuming more than my own share of responsibility; but it seems to me as if the commander of this Dangerous Castle, among other inabilities, were, as old people in this country say, subjected to a spell — and one which renders it impossible for him to guide his conduct so as to afford pleasure to those whom he is most desirous to oblige. Not a great many weeks since, whose eyes would have sparkled like those of Sir Aymer de Valence at the proposal of a general hunting-match after a new object of game; and now what is his bearing when such sport is proposed, merely, I think, to disappoint my purpose of obliging him? — a cold acquiescence drops half frozen from his lips, and he proposes to

go to rouse the wild cattle with an air of gravity, as if he were undertaking a pilgrimage to the tomb of a martyr."

"Not so, Sir John," answered the young knight. "In our present situation we stand conjoined in more charges than one, and although the greater and controlling trust is no doubt laid upon you as the elder and abler knight, yet still I feel that I myself have my own share of a serious responsibility. I trust, therefore, you will indulgently hear my opinion, and bear with it, even though it should appear to have relation to that part of our common charge which is more especially intrusted to your keeping. The dignity of knighthood which I have the honour to share with you, the *accolade* laid on my shoulder by the royal Plantagenet, entitles me, methinks, to so much grace."

"I cry you mercy," said the elder cavalier; "I forgot how important a person I had before me, dubbed by King Edward himself, who was moved no doubt by special reasons to confer such an early honour; and I certainly feel that I overstep my duty when I propose anything that savours like idle sport to a person of such grave pretensions."

"Sir John de Walton," retorted De Valence, "we have had something too much of this — let it stop here. All that I mean to say is, that in this wardship of Douglas Castle, it will not be by my consent, if any amusement, which distinctly infers a relaxation of discipline, be unnecessarily engaged in, and especially such as compels us to summon to our assistance a number of the Scots, whose evil disposition towards us we well know; nor will I, though my years have rendered me liable to such suspicion, suffer anything of this kind to be im-

puted to me; and if, unfortunately — though I am sure I know not why — we are in future to lay aside those bonds of familiar friendship which formerly linked us to each other, yet I see no reason why we should not bear ourselves in our necessary communications like knights and gentlemen, and put the best construction on each other's motives, since there can be no reason for imputing the worst to anything that comes from either of us."

"You may be right, Sir Aymer de Valence," said the governor, bending stiffly; "and since you say we are no longer bound to each other as friends, you may be certain, nevertheless, that I will never permit a hostile feeling, of which you are the object, to occupy my bosom. You have been long, and I hope not uselessly, my pupil in the duties of chivalry. You are the near relation of the Earl of Pembroke, my kind and constant patron, and, if these circumstances are well weighed, they form a connection which it would be difficult, at least for me, to break through. If you feel yourself, as you seem to intimate, less strictly tied by former obligations, you must take your own choice in fixing our relations towards each other."

"I can only say," replied De Valence, "that my conduct will naturally be regulated by your own; and you, Sir John, cannot hope more devoutly than I do, that our military duties may be fairly discharged, without interfering with our friendly intercourse."

The knights here parted, after a conference which once or twice had very nearly terminated in a full and cordial explanation; but still there was wanting one kind heartfelt word from either, to

break, as it were, the ice which was fast freezing upon their intercourse, and neither chose to be the first in making the necessary advances with sufficient cordiality, though each would have gladly done so, had the other appeared desirous of meeting it with the same ardour; but their pride was too high, and prevented either from saying what might at once have put them upon an open and manly footing. They parted, therefore, without again returning to the subject of the proposed diversion; until it was afterwards resumed in a formal note, praying Sir Aymer de Valence to accompany the commandant of Douglas Castle upon a solemn hunting-match, which had for its object the wild cattle of the neighbouring dale.

The time of meeting was appointed at six in the morning, beyond the gate of the outer barricade; and the chase was declared to be ended in the afternoon, when the *recheat* should be blown beneath the great oak, known by the name of Sholto's Club, which stood a remarkable object, where Douglas Dale was bounded by several scattered trees, the outskirts of the forest and hill country. The usual warning was sent out to the common people, or vassals of the district, which they, notwithstanding their feeling of antipathy, received in general with delight, upon the great Epicurean principle of *carpe diem* — that is to say, in whatever circumstances it happens to present itself, be sure you lose no recreation which life affords. A hunting-match has still its attractions, even though an English knight take his pleasure in the woods of the Douglas.

It was no doubt afflicting to these faithful vassals to acknowledge another lord than the re-

doubted Douglas, and to wait by wood and river at the command of English officers, and in the company of their archers, whom they accounted their natural enemies. Still it was the only species of amusement which had been permitted them for a long time, and they were not disposed to omit the rare opportunity of joining in it. The chase of the wolf, the wild boar, or even the timid stag, required silvan arms; the wild cattle still more demanded this equipment of war-bows and shafts, boar-spears and sharp swords, and other tools of the chase similar to those used in actual war. Considering this, the Scottish inhabitants were seldom allowed to join in the chase, except under regulations as to number and arms, and especially in preserving a balance of force on the side of the English soldiers, which was very offensive to them. The greater part of the garrison was upon such occasions kept on foot, and several detachments, formed according to the governor's direction, were stationed in different positions, in case any quarrel should suddenly break out.

CHAPTER VII.

The drivers thorough the wood went,
For to raise the deer;
Bowmen bickered upon the bent,
With their broad arrows clear.

The wylde thorough the woods went,
On every side shear;
Grehounds thorough the groves glent,
For to kill thir deer.

Ballad of Chevy Chase, Old Edition.

The appointed morning came in cold and raw, after the manner of the Scottish March weather. Dogs yelped, yawned, and shivered, and the huntsmen, though hardy and cheerful in expectation of the day's sport, twitched their mauds, or Lowland plaids, close to their throats, and looked with some dismay at the mists which floated about the horizon, now threatening to sink down on the peaks and ridges of prominent mountains, and now to shift their position under the influence of some of the uncertain gales, which rose and fell alternately, as they swept along the valley.

Nevertheless, the appearance of the whole formed, as is usual in almost all departments of the chase, a gay and a jovial spectacle. A brief truce seemed to have taken place between the nations, and the Scottish people appeared for the time rather as exhibiting the sports of their mountains in a friendly manner to the accomplished

knights and bonny archers of Old England, than as performing a feudal service, neither easy nor dignified in itself, at the instigation of usurping neighbours. The figures of the cavaliers, now half seen, now exhibited fully, and at the height of strenuous exertion, according to the character of the dangerous and broken ground, particularly attracted the attention of the pedestrians, who, leading the dogs or beating the thickets, dislodged such objects of chase as they found in the dingles, and kept their eyes fixed upon their companions, rendered more remarkable from being mounted, and the speed at which they urged their horses; the disregard of all accidents being as perfect as Melton Mowbray itself, or any other noted field of hunters of the present day, can exhibit.

The principles on which modern and ancient hunting were conducted are, however, as different as possible. A fox, or even a hare, is, in our own day, considered as a sufficient apology for a day's exercise to forty or fifty dogs, and nearly as many men and horses; but the ancient chase, even though not terminating, as it often did, in battle, carried with it objects more important, and an interest immeasurably more stirring. If indeed one species of exercise can be pointed out as more universally exhilarating and engrossing than others, it is certainly that of the chase. The poor overlaboured drudge, who has served out his day of life, and wearied all his energies in the service of his fellow-mortals — he who has been for many years the slave of agriculture, or (still worse) of manufactures — engaged in raising a single peck of corn from year to year, or in the monotonous labours of the desk — can hardly remain dead to

the general happiness when the chase sweeps past him with hound and horn, and for a moment feels all the exultation of the proudest cavalier who partakes the amusement. Let any one who has witnessed the sight recall to his imagination the vigour and lively interest which he has seen inspired into a village, including the oldest and feeblest of its inhabitants. In the words of Wordsworth, it is, on such occasions,

> Up, Timothy, up with your staff and away,
> Not a soul will remain in the village to-day;
> The hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds,
> And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds.

But compare these inspiring sounds to the burst of a whole feudal population enjoying the sport, whose lives, instead of being spent in the monotonous toil of modern avocations, have been agitated by the hazards of war, and of the chase, its near resemblance, and you must necessarily suppose that the excitation is extended, like a fire which catches to dry heath. To use the common expression, borrowed from another amusement, all is fish that comes in the net on such occasions. An ancient hunting-match (the nature of the carnage excepted) was almost equal to a modern battle, when the strife took place on the surface of a varied and unequal country. A whole district poured forth its inhabitants, who formed a ring of great extent, called technically a tinchel, and, advancing and narrowing their circle by degrees, drove before them the alarmed animals of every kind; all and each of which, as they burst from the thicket or the moorland, were objects of the bow, the javelin, or whatever missile weapons the

hunters possessed; while others were run down and worried by large greyhounds, or more frequently brought to bay, when the more important persons present claimed for themselves the pleasure of putting them to death with their chivalrous hands, incurring individually such danger as is inferred from a mortal contest even with the timid buck, when he is brought to the death-struggle, and has no choice but yielding his life or putting himself upon the defensive, by the aid of his splendid antlers, and with all the courage of despair.

The quantity of game found in Douglas Dale on this occasion was very considerable, for, as already noticed, it was a long time since a hunting upon a great scale had been attempted under the Douglases themselves, whose misfortunes had commenced, several years before, with those of their country. The English garrison, too, had not sooner judged themselves strong or numerous enough to exercise these valued feudal privileges. In the meantime the game increased considerably. The deer, the wild cattle, and the wild boars lay near the foot of the mountains, and made frequent irruptions into the lower part of the valley, which in Douglas Dale bears no small resemblance to an oasis, surrounded by tangled woods, and broken moors, occasionally rocky, and showing large tracts of that bleak dominion to which wild creatures gladly escape when pressed by the neighbourhood of man.

As the hunters traversed the spots which separated the field from the wood, there was always a simulating uncertainty what sort of game was to be found, and the marksman, with his bow ready

bent, or his javelin poised, and his good and well-bitted horse thrown upon its haunches, ready for a sudden start, observed watchfully what should rush from the covert, so that, were it deer, boar, wolf, wild cattle, or any other species of game, he might be in readiness.

The wolf, which, on account of its ravages, was the most obnoxious of the beasts of prey, did not, however, supply the degree of diversion which his name promised; he usually fled far — in some instances many miles — before he took courage to turn to bay, and though formidable at such moments, destroying both dogs and men by his terrible bite, yet at other times was rather despised for his cowardice. The boar, on the other hand, was a much more irascible and courageous animal.

The wild cattle, the most formidable of all the tenants of the ancient Caledonian forest, were, however, to the English cavaliers, by far the most interesting objects of pursuit.[1] Altogether, the ringing of bugles, the clattering of horses' hoofs, the lowing and bellowing of the enraged mountain cattle, the sobs of deer mangled by throttling dogs, the wild shouts of exultation of the men, made a chorus which extended far through the scene in which it arose, and seemed to threaten the inhabitants of the valley even in its inmost recesses.

During the course of the hunting, when a stag or a boar was expected, one of the wild cattle often came rushing forward, bearing down the young trees, crashing the branches in its progress, and in general dispersing whatever opposition was presented to it by the hunters. Sir John de Walton was the only one of the chivalry of the party who

[1] Note I. — Scottish Wild Cattle.

individually succeeded in mastering one of these powerful animals. Like a Spanish tauridor, he bore down and killed with his lance a ferocious bull; two well-grown calves and three kine were also slain, being unable to carry off the quantity of arrows, javelins, and other missiles directed against them by the archers and drivers; but many others, in spite of every endeavour to intercept them, escaped to their gloomy haunts in the remote skirts of the mountain called Cairntable, with their hides well feathered with those marks of human enmity.

A large portion of the morning was spent in this way, until a particular blast from the master of the hunt announced that he had not forgot the discreet custom of the repast, which, on such occasions, was provided for upon a scale proportioned to the multitude who had been convened to attend the sport.

The blast peculiar to the time assembled the whole party in an open space in a wood, where their numbers had room and accommodation to sit down upon the green turf, the slain game affording a plentiful supply for roasting or broiling, an employment in which the lower class were all immediately engaged; while puncheons and pipes, placed in readiness, and scientifically opened, supplied Gascoigne wine and mighty ale, at the pleasure of those who chose to appeal to them.

The knights, whose rank did not admit of interference, were seated by themselves, and ministered to by their squires and pages, to whom such menial services were not accounted disgraceful, but, on the contrary, a proper step of their education. The number of those distinguished persons

seated upon the present occasion at the table of dais, as it was called (in virtue of a canopy of green boughs with which it was overshadowed), comprehended Sir John de Walton, Sir Aymer de Valence, and some reverend brethren dedicated to the service of St. Bride, who, though Scottish ecclesiastics, were treated with becoming respect by the English soldiers. One or two Scottish retainers or vavasours, maintaining, perhaps in prudence, a suitable deference to the English knights, sat at the bottom of the table, and as many English archers, peculiarly respected by their superiors, were invited, according to the modern phrase, to the honours of the sitting.

Sir John de Walton sat at the head of the table. His eye, though it seemed to have no certain object, yet never for a moment remained stationary, but glanced from one countenance to another of the ring formed by his guests, for such they all were, no doubt, though he himself could hardly have told upon what principle he had issued the invitations; and even apparently was at a loss to think what, in one or two cases, had procured him the honour of their presence.

One person in particular caught De Walton's eye, as having the air of a redoubted man-at-arms, although it seemed as if fortune had not of late smiled upon his enterprises. He was a tall raw-boned man, of an extremely rugged countenance, and his skin, which showed itself through many a loophole in his dress, exhibited a complexion which must have endured all the varieties of an outlawed life; and akin to one who had, according to the customary phrase, "ta'en the bent with Robin Bruce" — in other words, occupied the

moors with him as an insurgent. Some such idea certainly crossed De Walton's mind. Yet the apparent coolness and absence of alarm with which the stranger sat at the board of an English officer, at the same time being wholly in his power, had much in it which was irreconcilable with any such suggestion. De Walton, and several of those about him, had in the course of the day observed that this tattered cavalier, the most remarkable parts of whose garb and equipments consisted of an old coat-of-mail and a rusted yet massive partisan about eight feet long, was possessed of superior skill in the art of hunting to any individual of their numerous party. The governor, having looked at this suspicious figure until he had rendered the stranger aware of the special interest which he attracted, at length filled a goblet of choice wine, and requested him, as one of the best pupils of Sir Tristrem who had attended upon the day's chase, to pledge him in a vintage superior to that supplied to the general company.

"I suppose, however, sir," said De Walton, "you will have no objections to put off my challenge of a brimmer, until you can answer my pledge in Gascoigne wine, which grew in the king's own demesne, was pressed for his own lip, and is therefore fittest to be emptied to his Majesty's health and prosperity."

"One half of the island of Britain," said the woodsman, with great composure, "will be of your honour's opinion; but as I belong to the other half, even the choicest liquor in Gascony cannot render that health acceptable to me."

A murmur of disapprobation ran through the warriors present; the priests hung their heads,

looked deadly grave, and muttered their paternosters.

"You see, stranger," said De Walton sternly, "that your speech discomposes the company."

"It may be so," replied the man, in the same blunt tone; "and it may happen that there is no harm in the speech notwithstanding."

"Do you consider that it is made in my presence?" answered De Walton.

"Yes, Sir Governor."

"And have you thought what must be the necessary inference?" continued De Walton.

"I may form a round guess," answered the stranger, "what I might have to fear, if your safe conduct and word of honour, when inviting me to this hunting, were less trustworthy than I know full well it really is. But I am your guest — your meat is even now passing my throat — your cup, filled with right good wine, I have just now quaffed off — and I would not fear the rankest Paynim infidel, if we stood in such relation together, much less an English knight. I tell you, besides, Sir Knight, you undervalue the wine we have quaffed. The high flavour and contents of your cup, grow where it will, give me spirit to tell you one or two circumstances which cold cautious sobriety would, in a moment like this, have left unsaid. You wish, I doubt not, to know who I am? My christian name is Michael — my surname is that of Turnbull, a redoubted clan, to whose honours, even in the field of hunting or of battle, I have added something. My abode is beneath the mountain of Rubieslaw, by the fair streams of Teviot. You are surprised that I know how to hunt the wild cattle — I, who have made

H-MR

them my sport from infancy in the lonely forests of Jed and Southdean, and have killed more of them than you or any Englishman in your host ever saw, even if you include the doughty deeds of this day."

The bold borderer made this declaration with the same provoking degree of coolness which predominated in his whole demeanour, and was indeed his principal attribute. His effrontery did not fail to produce its effect upon Sir John de Walton, who instantly called out, "To arms! to arms! — Secure the spy and traitor! Ho! pages and yeomen — William, Anthony, Bend-the-bow, and Greenleaf — seize the traitor, and bind him with your bowstrings and dog-leashes — bind him, I say, until the blood start from beneath his nails!"

"Here is a goodly summons!" said Turnbull, with a sort of horse-laugh. "Were I as sure of being answered by twenty men I could name, there would be small doubt of the upshot of this day."

The archers thickened around the hunter, yet laid no hold on him, none of them being willing to be the first who broke the peace proper to the occasion.

"Tell me," said De Walton, "thou traitor, for what waitest thou here?"

"Simply and solely," said the Jed forester, "that I may deliver up to the Douglas the castle of his ancestors, and that I may insure thee, Sir Englishman, the payment of thy deserts, by cutting that very throat which thou makest such a bawling use of."

At the same time, perceiving that the yeomen were crowding behind him to carry their lord's

commands into execution so soon as they should be reiterated, the huntsman turned himself short round upon those who appeared about to surprise him, and having, by the suddenness of the action, induced them to step back a pace, he proceeded — "Yes, John de Walton, my purpose was ere now to have put thee to death, as one whom I find in possession of that castle and territory which belong to my master, a knight much more worthy than thyself; but I know not why I have paused — thou hast given me food when I have hungered for twenty-four hours, I have not therefore had the heart to pay thee at advantage as thou hast deserved. Begone from this place and country, and take the fair warning of a foe: thou hast constituted thyself the mortal enemy of this people, and there are those among them who have seldom been injured or defied with impunity. Take no care in searching after me — it will be in vain — until I meet thee at a time which will come at my pleasure, not thine. Push not your inquisition into cruelty, to discover by what means I have deceived you, for it is impossible for you to learn; and with this friendly advice, look at me and take your leave, for, although we shall one day meet, it may be long ere I see you again."

De Walton remained silent, hoping that his prisoner (for he saw no chance of his escaping) might, in his communicative humour, drop some more information, and was not desirous to precipitate a fray with which the scene was likely to conclude, unconscious at the same time of the advantage which he thereby gave the daring hunter.

As Turnbull concluded his sentence, he made a

sudden spring backwards, which carried him out of the circle formed around him, and, before they were aware of his intentions, at once disappeared among the underwood.

"Seize him — seize him!" repeated De Walton; "let us have him at least at our discretion, unless the earth has actually swallowed him."

This indeed appeared not unlikely, for near the place where Turnbull had made the spring there yawned a steep ravine, into which he plunged, and descended by the assistance of branches, bushes, and copsewood, until he reached the bottom, where he found some road to the outskirts of the forest, through which he made his escape, leaving the most expert woodsmen among the pursuers totally at fault, and unable to trace his footsteps.

CHAPTER VIII.

This interlude carried some confusion into the proceedings of the hunt, thus suddenly surprised by the apparition of Michael Turnbull, an armed and avowed follower of the House of Douglas, a sight so little to be expected in the territory where his master was held a rebel and a bandit, and where he himself must have been well known to most of the peasantry present. The circumstance made an obvious impression on the English chivalry. Sir John de Walton looked grave and thoughtful, ordered the hunters to be assembled on the spot, and directed his soldiers to commence a strict search among the persons who had attended the chase, so as to discover whether Turnbull had any companions among them; but it was too late to make that inquiry in the strict fashion which De Walton directed.

The Scottish attendants on the chase, when they beheld that the hunting, under pretence of which they were called together, was interrupted for the purpose of laying hands upon their persons, and subjecting them to examination, took care to suit their answers to the questions put to them; in a word, they kept their own secret, if they had any. Many of them, conscious of being the weaker party, became afraid of foul play, slipped away from the places to which they had been appointed, and left the hunting-match like men who con-

ceived they had been invited with no friendly intent. Sir John de Walton became aware of the decreasing numbers of the Scottish — their gradual disappearance awakening in the English knight that degree of suspicion which had of late become his peculiar characteristic.

"Take, I pray thee," said he to Sir Aymer de Valence, "as many men-at-arms as thou canst get together in five minutes' space, and at least a hundred of the mounted archers, and ride as fast as thou canst, without permitting them to straggle from thy standard, to reinforce the garrison of Douglas; for I have my own thoughts what may have been attempted on the castle, when we observe with our own eyes such a nest of traitors here assembled."

"With reverence, Sir John," replied Aymer, "you shoot in this matter rather beyond the mark. That the Scottish peasants have bad thoughts against us, I will be the last to deny; but, long debarred from any silvan sport, you cannot wonder at their crowding to any diversion by wood or river, and still less at their being easily alarmed as to the certainty of the safe footing on which they stand with us. The least rough usage is likely to strike them with fear, and with the desire of escape, and so" ——

"And so," said Sir John de Walton, who had listened with a degree of impatience scarce consistent with the grave and formal politeness which one knight was accustomed to bestow upon another — "and so I would rather see Sir Aymer de Valence busy his horse's heels to execute my orders, than give his tongue the trouble of impugning them."

At this sharp reprimand, all present looked at each other with indications of marked displeasure. Sir Aymer was highly offended, but saw it was no time to indulge in reprisal. He bowed until the feather which was in his barret-cap mingled with his horse's mane, and without reply — for he did not even choose to trust his voice in reply at the moment — headed a considerable body of cavalry by the straightest road back to the Castle of Douglas.

When he came to one of those eminences from which he could observe the massive and complicated towers and walls of the old fortress, with the glitter of the broad lake which surrounded it on three sides, he felt much pleasure at the sight of the great banner of England, which streamed from the highest part of the building. "I knew it," he internally said; "I was certain that Sir John de Walton had become a very woman in the indulgence of his fears and suspicions. Alas! that a situation of responsibility should so much have altered a disposition which I have known so noble and so knightly! By this good day, I scarce know in what manner I should demean me when thus publicly rebuked before the garrison. Certainly he deserves that I should, at some time or other, let him understand that, however he may triumph in the exercise of his short-lived command, yet, when man is to meet with man, it will puzzle Sir John de Walton to show himself the superior of Aymer de Valence, or perhaps to establish himself as his equal. But if, on the contrary, his fears, however fantastic, are sincere at the moment he expresses them, it becomes me to obey punctually commands which, however absurd, are imposed in consequence of the governor's belief that they

are rendered necessary by the times, and not inventions designed to vex and domineer over his officers in the indulgence of his official powers. I would I knew which is the true statement of the case, and whether the once famed De Walton is become afraid of his enemies more than fits a knight, or makes imaginary doubts the pretext of tyrannising over his friend. I cannot say it would make much difference to me, but I would rather have it that the man I once loved had turned a petty tyrant than a weak-spirited coward; and I would be content that he should study to vex me, rather than be afraid of his own shadow."

With these ideas passing in his mind, the young knight crossed the causeway which traversed the piece of water that fed the moat, and, passing under the strongly fortified gateway, gave strict orders for letting down the portcullis, and elevating the drawbridge, even at the appearance of De Walton's own standard before it.

A slow and guarded movement from the hunting-ground to the Castle of Douglas gave the governor ample time to recover his temper, and to forget that his young friend had shown less alacrity than usual in obeying his commands. He was even disposed to treat as a jest the length of time and extreme degree of ceremony with which every point of martial discipline was observed on his own readmission to the castle, though the raw air of a wet spring evening whistled around his own unsheltered person, and those of his followers, as they waited before the castle gate for the exchange of passwords, the delivery of keys, and all the slow minutiæ attendant upon the movements of a garrison in a well-guarded fortress.

"Come," said he to an old knight, who was peevishly blaming the lieutenant-governor, "it was my own fault; I spoke but now to Aymer de Valence with more authoritative emphasis than his newly dubbed dignity was pleased with, and this precise style of obedience is a piece of not unnatural and very pardonable revenge. Well, we will owe him a return, Sir Philip — shall we not? This is not a night to keep a man at the gate."

This dialogue, overheard by some of the squires and pages, was bandied about from one to another, until it entirely lost the tone of good-humour in which it was spoken, and the offence was one for which Sir John de Walton and old Sir Philip were to meditate revenge, and was said to have been represented by the governor as a piece of mortal and intentional offence on the part of his subordinate officer.

Thus an increasing feud went on from day to day between two warriors, who, with no just cause of quarrel, had at heart every reason to esteem and love each other. It became visible in the fortress even to those of the lower rank, who hoped to gain some consequence, by intermingling in the species of emulation produced by the jealousy of the commanding officers — an emulation which may take place, indeed, in the present day, but can hardly have the same sense of wounded pride and jealous dignity attached to it which existed in times when the personal honour of knighthood rendered those who possessed it jealous of every punctilio.

So many little debates took place between the two knights, that Sir Aymer de Valence thought himself under the necessity of writing to his uncle and namesake, the Earl of Pembroke, stating that

his officer, Sir John de Walton, had unfortunately of late taken some degree of prejudice against him and that, after having borne with many provoking instances of his displeasure, he was now compelled to request that his place of service should be changed from the Castle of Douglas, to wherever honour could be acquired, and time might be given to put an end to his present cause of complaint against his commanding officer. Through the whole letter, young Sir Aymer was particularly cautious how he expressed his sense of Sir John de Walton's jealousy or severe usage; but such sentiments are not easily concealed, and in spite of him an air of displeasure glanced out from several passages, and indicated his discontent with his uncle's old friend and companion in arms, and with the sphere of military duty which his uncle had himself assigned him.

An accidental movement among the English troops brought Sir Aymer an answer to his letter sooner than he could have hoped for at that time of day, in the ordinary course of correspondence, which was then extremely slow and interrupted.

Pembroke, a rigid old warrior, entertained the most partial opinion of Sir John de Walton, who was a work as it were of his own hands, and was indignant to find that his nephew, whom he considered as a mere boy, elated by having had the dignity of knighthood conferred upon him at an age unusually early, did not absolutely coincide with him in this opinion. He replied to him, accordingly, in a tone of high displeasure, and expressed himself as a person of rank would write to a young and dependent kinsman upon the duties of his profession; and, as he gathered his nephew's

cause of complaint from his own letter, he conceived that he did him no injustice in making it slighter than it really was. He reminded the young man that the study of chivalry consisted in the faithful and patient discharge of military service, whether of high or low degree, according to the circumstances in which war placed the champion. That, above all, the post of danger, which Douglas Castle had been termed by common consent, was also the post of honour; and that a young man should be cautious how he incurred the supposition of being desirous of quitting his present honourable command, because he was tired of the discipline of a military director so renowned as Sir John de Walton. Much also there was, as was natural in a letter of that time, concerning the duty of young men, whether in council or in arms, to be guided implicitly by their elders; and it was observed, with justice, that the commanding officer, who had put himself into the situation of being responsible with his honour, if not his life, for the event of the siege or blockade, might justly, and in a degree more than common, claim the implicit direction of the whole defence. Lastly, Pembroke reminded his nephew that he was, in a great measure, dependent upon the report of Sir John de Walton for the character which he was to sustain in after-life; and reminded him that a few actions of headlong and inconsiderate valour would not so firmly found his military reputation, as months and years spent in regular, humble, and steady obedience to the commands which the governor of Douglas Castle might think necessary in so dangerous a conjuncture.

This missive arrived within so short a time after

the despatch of the letter to which it was a reply, that Sir Aymer was almost tempted to suppose that his uncle had some mode of corresponding with De Walton, unknown to the young knight himself, and to the rest of the garrison. And as the earl alluded to some particular displeasure which had been exhibited by De Valence on a late trivial occasion, his uncle's knowledge of this, and other minutiæ, seemed to confirm his idea that his own conduct was watched in a manner which he did not feel honourable to himself, or dignified on the part of his relative; in a word, he conceived himself exposed to that sort of surveillance of which, in all ages, the young have accused the old. It hardly needs to say, that the admonition of the Earl of Pembroke greatly chafed the fiery spirit of his nephew; insomuch, that if the earl had wished to write a letter purposely to increase the prejudices which he desired to put an end to, he could not have made use of terms better calculated for that effect.

The truth was that the old archer Gilbert Greenleaf had, without the knowledge of the young knight, gone to Pembroke's camp, in Ayrshire, and was recommended by Sir John de Walton to the earl, as a person who could give such minute information respecting Aymer de Valence as he might desire to receive. The old archer was, as we have seen, a formalist, and when pressed on some points of Sir Aymer de Valence's discipline, he did not hesitate to throw out hints, which, connected with those in the knight's letter to his uncle, made the severe old earl adopt too implicitly the idea that his nephew was indulging a spirit of insubordination, and a sense of impatience under

authority, most dangerous to the character of a young soldier. A little explanation might have produced a complete agreement in the sentiments of both; but for this, fate allowed neither time nor opportunity; and the old earl was unfortunately induced to become a party, instead of a negotiator, in the quarrel,

And by decision more embroil'd the fray.

Sir John de Walton soon perceived that the receipt of Pembroke's letter did not in any respect alter the cold ceremonious conduct of his lieutenant towards him, which limited their intercourse to what their situation rendered indispensable, and exhibited no advances to any more frank or intimate connection. Thus, as may sometimes be the case between officers in their relative situations even at the present day, they remained in that cold stiff degree of official communication, in which their intercourse was limited to as few expressions as the respective duties of their situation absolutely demanded. Such a state of misunderstanding is, in fact, worse than a downright quarrel; — the latter may be explained or apologised for, or become the subject of mediation; but in such a case as the former, an *éclaircissement* is as unlikely to take place as a general engagement between two armies which have taken up strong defensive positions on both sides. Duty, however, obliged the two principal persons in the garrison of Douglas Castle to be often together, when they were so far from seeking an opportunity of making up matters, that they usually revived ancient subjects of debate.

It was upon such an occasion that De Walton,

in a very formal manner, asked De Valence in what capacity, and for how long time, it was his pleasure that the minstrel, called Bertram, should remain at the castle.

"A week," said the governor, "is certainly long enough, in this time and place, to express the hospitality due to a minstrel."

"Certainly," replied the young man, "I have not interest enough in the subject to form a single wish upon it."

"In that case," resumed De Walton, "I shall request of this person to cut short his visit at the Castle of Douglas."

"I know no particular interest," replied Aymer de Valence, "which I can possibly have in this man's motions. He is here under pretence of making some researches after the writings of Thomas of Erceldoun, called the Rhymer, which he says are infinitely curious, and of which there is a volume in the old Baron's study, saved somehow from the flames at the last conflagration. This told, you know as much of his errand as I do; and if you hold the presence of a wandering old man, and the neighbourhood of a boy, dangerous to the castle under your charge, you will no doubt do well to dismiss them — it will cost but a word of your mouth."

"Pardon me," said De Walton; "the minstrel came here as one of your retinue, and I could not, in fitting courtesy, send him away without your leave."

"I am sorry, then," answered Sir Aymer, "in my turn, that you did not mention your purpose sooner. I never entertained a dependent vassal or servant, whose residence in the castle I would

wish to have prolonged a moment beyond your honourable pleasure."

"I am sorry," said Sir John de Walton, "that we two have of late grown so extremely courteous that it is difficult for us to understand each other. This minstrel and his son come from we know not where, and are bound we know not whither. There is a report among some of your escort that this fellow Bertram upon the way had the audacity to impugn, even to your face, the King of England's right to the crown of Scotland, and that he debated the point with you, while your other attendants were desired by you to keep behind and out of hearing."

"Hah!" said Sir Aymer, "do you mean to found on that circumstance any charge against my loyalty? I pray you to observe, that such an averment would touch mine honour, which I am ready and willing to defend to the last gasp."

"No doubt of it, Sir Knight," answered the governor; "but it is the strolling minstrel, and not the high-born English knight, against whom the charge is brought. Well! the minstrel comes to this castle, and he intimates a wish that his son should be allowed to take up his quarters at the little old convent of St. Bride, where two or three Scottish nuns and friars are still permitted to reside, most of them rather out of respect to their order than for any good-will which they are supposed to bear the English or their sovereign. It may also be noticed, that this leave was purchased by a larger sum of money, if my information be correct, than is usually to be found in the purses of travelling minstrels, a class of wanderers

alike remarkable for their poverty and for their genius. What do you think of all this?"

"I?" replied De Valence. "I am happy that my situation, as a soldier under command, altogether dispenses with my thinking of it at all. My post, as lieutenant of your castle, is such, that if I can manage matters so as to call my honour and my soul my own, I must think that quite enough of free-will is left at my command; and I promise you shall not have again to reprove, or send a bad report of me to my uncle, on that account."

"This is beyond sufferance!" said Sir John de Walton, half aside, and then proceeded aloud — "Do not, for Heaven's sake, do yourself and me the injustice of supposing that I am endeavouring to gain an advantage over you by these questions. Recollect, young knight, that when you evade giving your commanding officer your advice when required, you fail as much in point of duty as if you declined affording him the assistance of your sword and lance."

"Such being the case," answered De Valence, "let me know plainly on what matter it is that you require my opinion? I will deliver it plainly, and stand by the result, even if I should have the misfortune (a crime unpardonable in so young a man, and so inferior an officer) to differ from that of Sir John de Walton."

"I would ask you then, Sir Knight of Valence," answered the governor, "what is your opinion with respect to this minstrel, Bertram, and whether the suspicions respecting him and his son are not such as to call upon me, in performance of my duty, to put them to a close examination, with

the question ordinary and extraordinary, as is usual in such cases, and to expel them not only from the castle, but from the whole territory of Douglas Dale, under pain of scourging if they be again found wandering in these parts?"

"You ask me my opinion," said De Valence, "and you shall have it, Sir Knight of Walton, as freely and fairly as if matters stood betwixt us on a footing as friendly as they ever did. I agree with you, that most of those who in these days profess the science of minstrelsy are altogether unqualified to support the higher pretensions of that noble order. Minstrels by right are men who have dedicated themselves to the noble occupation of celebrating knightly deeds and generous principles; it is in their verse that the valiant knight is handed down to fame, and the poet has a right, nay is bound, to emulate the virtues which he praises. The looseness of the times has diminished the consequence and impaired the morality of this class of wanderers; their satire and their praise are now too often distributed on no other principle than love of gain; yet let us hope that there are still among them some who know, and also willingly perform, their duty. My own opinion is, that this Bertram holds himself as one who has not shared in the degradation of his brethren, nor bent the knee to the mammon of the time; it must remain with you, sir, to judge whether such a person, honourably and morally disposed, can cause any danger to the Castle of Douglas. But believing, from the sentiments he has manifested to me, that he is incapable of playing the part of a traitor, I must strongly remonstrate against his being punished as one, or

subjected to the torture within the walls of an English garrison. I should blush for my country, if it required of us to inflict such wanton misery upon wanderers, whose sole fault is poverty; and your own knightly sentiments will suggest more than would become me to state to Sir John de Walton, unless in so far as is necessary to apologise for retaining my own opinion."

Sir John de Walton's dark brow was stricken with red when he heard an opinion delivered in opposition to his own, which plainly went to stigmatise his advice as ungenerous, unfeeling, and unknightly. He made an effort to preserve his temper, while he thus replied with a degree of calmness. "You have given your opinion, Sir Aymer de Valence; and that you have given it openly and boldly, without regard to my own, I thank you. It is not quite so clear that I am obliged to defer my own sentiments to yours, in case the rules on which I hold my office — the commands of the king — and the observations which I may personally have made, shall recommend to me a different line of conduct from that which you think it right to suggest."

De Walton bowed, in conclusion, with great gravity; and the young knight, returning the reverence with exactly the same degree of stiff formality, asked whether there were any particular orders respecting his duty in the castle, and, having received an answer in the negative, took his departure.

Sir John de Walton, after an expression of impatience, as if disappointed at finding that the advance which he had made towards an explanation with his young friend had proved unexpectedly

abortive, composed his brow as if to deep thought, and walked several times to and fro in the apartment, considering what course he was to take in these circumstances. "It is hard to censure him severely," he said, "when I recollect that, on first entering upon life, my own thoughts and feelings would have been the same with those of this giddy and hot-headed, but generous boy. Now prudence teaches me to suspect mankind in a thousand instances where perhaps there is not sufficient ground. If I am disposed to venture my own honour and fortune, rather than an idle travelling minstrel should suffer a little pain, which at all events I might make up to him by money, still, have I a right to run the risk of a conspiracy against the king, and thus advance the treasonable surrender of the Castle of Douglas, for which I know so many schemes are formed; for which, too, none can be imagined so desperate but agents will be found bold enough to undertake the execution? A man who holds my situation, although the slave of conscience, ought to learn to set aside those false scruples which assume the appearance of flowing from our own moral feeling, whereas they are in fact instilled by the suggestion of affected delicacy. I will not, I swear by Heaven, be infected by the follies of a boy such as Aymer; I will not, that I may defer to his caprices, lose all that love, honour, and ambition can propose, for the reward of twelve months' service, of a nature the most watchful and unpleasant. I will go straight to my point, and use the ordinary precautions in Scotland, which I should employ in Normandy or Gascoigny. — What ho! page! who waits there?"

One of his attendants replied to his summons. "Seek me out Gilbert Greenleaf the archer, and tell him I would speak with him touching the two bows and the sheaf of arrows concerning which I gave him a commission to Ayr."

A few minutes intervened after the order was given, when the archer entered, holding in his hand two bow-staves, not yet fashioned, and a number of arrows secured together with a thong. He bore the mysterious looks of one whose apparent business is not of very great consequence, but is meant as a passport for other affairs which are in themselves of a secret nature. Accordingly, as the knight was silent, and afforded no other opening for Greenleaf, that judicious negotiator proceeded to enter upon such as was open to him.

"Here are the bow-staves, noble sir, which you desired me to obtain while I was at Ayr with the Earl of Pembroke's army. They are not so good as I could have wished, yet are perhaps of better quality than could have been procured by any other than a fair judge of the weapon. The Earl of Pembroke's whole camp are frantic mad in order to procure real Spanish staves from the Groyne, and other ports in Spain; but though two vessels laden with such came into the port of Ayr, said to be for the king's army, yet I believe never one half of them have come into English hands. These two grew in Sherwood, which, having been seasoned since the time of Robin Hood, are not likely to fail either in strength or in aim, in so strong a hand, and with so just an eye, as those of the men who wait on your worship."

"And who has got the rest, since two ships'

cargoes of new bow-staves are arrived at Ayr, and thou with difficulty hast only procured me two old ones?" said the governor.

"Faith, I pretend not skill enough to know," answered Greenleaf, shrugging his shoulders. "Talk there is of plots in that country as well as here. It is said that their Bruce, and the rest of his kinsmen, intend a new May-game, and that the outlawed king proposes to land near to Turnberry, early in summer, with a number of stout kernes from Ireland; and no doubt the men of his mock earldom of Carrick are getting them ready with bow and spear for so hopeful an undertaking. I reckon that it will not cost us the expense of more than a few score of sheaves of arrows to put all that matter to rights."

"Do you talk, then, of conspiracies in this part of the country, Greenleaf?" said De Walton. "I know you are a sagacious fellow, well bred for many a day to the use of the bent stick and string, and will not allow such a practice to go on under thy nose, without taking notice of it."

"I am old enough, Heaven knows," said Greenleaf, "and have had good experience of these Scottish wars, and know well whether these native Scots are a people to be trusted to by knight or yeoman. Say they are a false generation, and say a good archer told you so, who, with a fair aim, seldom missed a handsbreadth of the white. Ah! sir, your honour knows how to deal with them — ride them strongly, and rein them hard — you are not like those simple novices who imagine that all is to be done by gentleness, and wish to parade themselves as courteous and generous to those faithless mountaineers, who never, in the course

of their lives, knew any tincture either of courteousness or generosity."

"Thou alludest to some one," said the governor "and I charge thee, Gilbert, to be plain and sincere with me. Thou knowest, methinks, that in trusting me thou wilt come to no harm?"

"It is true, it is true, sir," said the old remnant of the wars, carrying his hand to his brow, "but it were imprudent to communicate all the remarks which float through an old man's brain in the idle moments of such a garrison as this. One stumbles unawares on fantasies, as well as realities, and thus one gets, not altogether undeservedly, the character of a talebearer and mischief-maker among his comrades, and methinks I would not willingly fall under that accusation."

"Speak frankly to me," answered De Walton, "and have no fear of being misconstrued, whosoever the conversation may concern."

"Nay, in plain truth," answered Gilbert, "I fear not the greatness of this young knight, being, as I am, the oldest soldier in the garrison, and having drawn a bow-string long and many a day ere he was weaned from his nurse's breast."

"It is, then," said De Walton, "my lieutenant and friend, Aymer de Valence, at whom your suspicions point?"

"At nothing," replied the archer, "touching the honour of the young knight himself, who is as brave as the sword he wears, and, his youth considered, stands high in the roll of English chivalry; but he is young, as your worship knows, and I own that in the choice of his company he disturbs and alarms me."

"Why, you know, Greenleaf," answered the

governor, "that in the leisure of a garrison a knight cannot always confine his sports and pleasures among those of his own rank, who are not numerous, and may not be so gamesome or fond of frolic as he would desire them to be."

"I know that well," answered the archer, "nor would I say a word concerning your honour's lieutenant for joining any honest fellows, however inferior their rank, in the wrestling-ring, or at a bout of quarterstaff. But if Sir Aymer de Valence has a fondness for martial tales of former days, methinks he had better learn them from the ancient soldiers who have followed Edward the First, whom God assoilzie, and who have known before his time the Barons' wars and other onslaughts, in which the knights and archers of merry England transmitted so many gallant actions to be recorded by fame; this truly, I say, were more beseeming the Earl of Pembroke's nephew, than to see him closet himself day after day with a strolling minstrel, who gains his livelihood by reciting nonsense and lies to such young men as are fond enough to believe him, of whom hardly any one knows whether he be English or Scottish in his opinions, and still less can any one pretend to say whether he is of English or Scottish birth, or with what purpose he lies lounging about this castle, and is left free to communicate everything which passes within it to those old mutterers of matins at St. Bride's, who say with their tongues God save King Edward, but pray in their hearts God save King Robert the Bruce. Such a communication he can easily carry on by means of his son, who lies at St. Bride's cell, as your worship knows, under pretence of illness."

"How do you say?" exclaimed the governor. 'Under pretence? Is he not then really indisposed?"

"Nay, he may be sick to the death for aught I know," said the archer; "but if so, were it not then more natural that the father should attend his son's sick-bed, than that he should be ranging about this castle, where one eternally meets him in the old Baron's study, or in some corner where you least expect to find him?"

"If he has no lawful object," replied the knight, "it might be as you say; but he is said to be in quest of ancient poems or prophecies of Merlin, of the Rhymer, or some other old bard; and in truth it is natural for him to wish to enlarge his stock of knowledge and power of giving amusement, and where should he find the means save in a study filled with ancient books?"

"No doubt," replied the archer, with a sort of dry civil sneer of incredulity. "I have seldom known an insurrection in Scotland but that it was prophesied by some old forgotten rhyme, conjured out of dust and cobwebs, for the sake of giving courage to those North Country rebels, who durst not otherwise have abidden the whistling of the grey-goose shaft; but curled heads are hasty, and, with licence, even your own train, Sir Knight, retains too much of the fire of youth for such uncertain times as the present."

"Thou hast convinced me, Gilbert Greenleaf, and I will look into this man's business and occupation more closely than hitherto. This is no time to peril the safety of a royal castle for the sake of affecting generosity towards a man of whom we know so little, and to whom, till we

receive a very full explanation, we may, without doing him injustice, attach grave suspicions. Is he now in the apartment called the Baron's study?"

"Your worship will be certain to find him there," replied Greenleaf.

"Then follow me, with two or three of thy comrades, and keep out of sight, but within hearing: it may be necessary to arrest this man."

"My assistance," said the old archer, "shall be at hand when you call, but" ——

"But what?" said the knight. "I hope I am not to find doubts and disobedience on all hands?"

"Certainly not on mine," replied Greenleaf; "I would only remind your worship that what I have said was a sincere opinion expressed in answer to your worship's question; and that, as Sir Aymer de Valence has avowed himself the patron of this man, I would not willingly be left to the hazard of his revenge."

"Pshaw!" answered De Walton. "Is Aymer de Valence governor of this castle, or am I? Or to whom do you imagine you are responsible for answering such questions as I may put to you?"

"Nay," replied the archer, secretly not displeased at seeing De Walton show some little jealousy of his own authority, "believe me, Sir Knight, that I know my own station and your worship's, and that I am not now to be told to whom I owe obedience."

"To the study, then, and let us find the man," said the governor.

"A fine matter indeed," subjoined Greenleaf, following him, "that your worship should have to go in person to look after the arrest of so mean an individual. But your honour is right: these

minstrels are often jugglers, and possess the power of making their escape by means which borrel[1] folk like myself are disposed to attribute to necromancy."

Without attending to these last words, Sir John de Walton set forth towards the study, walking at a quick pace, as if this conversation had augmented his desire to find himself in possession of the person of the suspected minstrel.

Traversing the ancient passages of the castle, the governor had no difficulty in reaching the study, which was strongly vaulted with stone, and furnished with a sort of iron cabinet, intended for the preservation of articles and papers of value, in case of fire. Here he found the minstrel seated at a small table, sustaining before him a manuscript, apparently of great antiquity, from which he seemed engaged in making extracts. The windows of the room were very small, and still showed some traces that they had originally been glazed with a painted history of St. Bride — another mark of the devotion of the great family of Douglas to their tutelar saint.

The minstrel, who had seemed deeply wrapped in the contemplation of his task, on being disturbed by the unlooked-for entrance of Sir John de Walton, rose with every mark of respect and humility, and, remaining standing in the governor's presence, appeared to wait for his interrogations, as if he had anticipated that the visit concerned himself particularly.

"I am to suppose, Sir Minstrel," said Sir John de Walton, "that you have been successful in your search, and have found the roll of poetry or pro-

[1] Unlearned.

phecies that you proposed to seek after amongst these broken shelves and tattered volumes?"

"More successful than I could have expected," replied the minstrel, "considering the effects of the conflagration. This, Sir Knight, is apparently the fatal volume for which I sought, and strange it is, considering the heavy chance of other books contained in this library, that I have been able to find a few though imperfect fragments of it."

"Since, therefore, you have been permitted to indulge your curiosity," said the governor, "I trust, minstrel, you will have no objection to satisfy mine?"

The minstrel replied with the same humility, "that if there was anything within the poor compass of his skill which could gratify Sir John de Walton in any degree, he would but reach his lute, and presently obey his commands."

"You mistake, sir," said Sir John, somewhat harshly. "I am none of those who have hours to spend in listening to tales or music of former days; my life has hardly given me time enough for learning the duties of my profession, far less has it allowed me leisure for such twangling follies. I care not who knows it, but my ear is so incapable of judging of your art, which you doubtless think a noble one, that I can scarcely tell the modulation of one tune from another."

"In that case," replied the minstrel composedly, "I can hardly promise myself the pleasure of affording your worship the amusement which I might otherwise have done."

"Nor do I look for any at your hand," said the governor, advancing a step nearer to him, and speaking in a sterner tone. "I want information.

sir, which I am assured you can give me, if you incline; and it is my duty to tell you, that if you show unwillingness to speak the truth, I know means by which it will become my painful duty to extort it in a more disagreeable manner than I would wish."

"If your questions, Sir Knight," answered Bertram, "be such as I can or ought to answer, there shall be no occasion to put them more than once. If they are such as I cannot or ought not to reply to, believe me that no threats of violence will extort an answer from me."

"You speak boldly," said Sir John de Walton; "but take my word for it, that your courage will be put to the test. I am as little fond of proceeding to such extremities as you can be of undergoing them, but such will be the natural consequence of your own obstinacy. I therefore ask you, whether Bertram be your real name — whether you have any other profession than that of a travelling minstrel — and, lastly, whether you have any acquaintance or connection with any Englishman or Scottishman beyond the walls of this Castle of Douglas?"

"To these questions," replied the minstrel, "I have already answered the worshipful knight, Sir Aymer de Valence, and, having fully satisfied him, it is not, I conceive, necessary that I should undergo a second examination; nor is it consistent either with your worship's honour, or that of the lieutenant-governor, that such a re-examination should take place."

"You are very considerate," replied the governor, "of my honour and of that of Sir Aymer de Valence. Take my word for it, they are both in

perfect safety in our own keeping, and may dispense with your attention. I ask you, will you answer the inquiries which it is my duty to make, or am I to enforce obedience by putting you under the penalties of the question? I have already, it is my duty to say, seen the answers you have returned to my lieutenant, and they do not satisfy me."

He at the same time clapped his hands, and two or three archers showed themselves, stripped of their tunics, and only attired in their shirts and hose.

"I understand," said the minstrel, "that you intend to inflict upon me a punishment which is foreign to the genius of the English laws, in that no proof is adduced of my guilt. I have already told that I am by birth an Englishman, by profession a minstrel, and that I am totally unconnected with any person likely to nourish any design against this Castle of Douglas, Sir John de Walton, or his garrison. What answers you may extort from me by bodily agony, I cannot, to speak as a plain-dealing Christian, hold myself responsible for. I think that I can endure as much pain as any one; I am sure that I never yet felt a degree of agony that I would not willingly prefer to breaking my plighted word, or becoming a false informer against innocent persons, but I own I do not know the extent to which the art of torture may be carried; and though I do not fear you, Sir John de Walton, yet I must acknowledge that I fear myself, since I know not to what extremity your cruelty may be capable of subjecting me, or how far I may be enabled to bear it. I, therefore, in the first place, protest, that I shall in no man-

ner be liable for any words which I may utter in the course of any examination enforced from me by torture; and you must therefore, under such circumstances, proceed to the execution of an office, which, permit me to say, is hardly that which I expected to have found thus administered by an accomplished knight like yourself."

"Hark you, sir," replied the governor, "you and I are at issue, and in doing my duty I ought instantly to proceed to the extremities I have threatened; but perhaps you yourself feel less reluctance to undergo the examination as proposed, than I shall do in commanding it; I will therefore consign you for the present to a place of confinement suitable to one who is suspected of being a spy upon this fortress. Until you are pleased to remove such suspicions, your lodgings and nourishment are those of a prisoner. In the meantime, before subjecting you to the question, take notice, I will myself ride to the Abbey of St. Bride, and satisfy myself whether the young person whom you would pass as your son is possessed of the same determination as that which you yourself seem to assert. It may so happen that his examination and yours may throw such light upon each other as will decidedly prove either your guilt or innocence, without its being confirmed by the use of the extraordinary question. If it be otherwise, tremble for your son's sake, if not for your own. — Have I shaken you, sir? — or do you fear, for your boy's young sinews and joints, the engines which, in your own case, you seem willing to defy?"

"Sir," answered the minstrel, recovering from the momentary emotion he had shown, "I leave it

to yourself, as a man of honour and candour, whether you ought, in common fairness, to form a worse opinion of any man, because he is not unwilling to incur, in his own person, severities which he would not desire to be inflicted upon his child, a sickly youth, just recovering from a dangerous disease."

"It is my duty," answered De Walton, after a short pause, "to leave no stone unturned by which this business may be traced to the source; and if thou desirest mercy for thy son, thou wilt thyself most easily attain it, by setting him the example of honesty and plain-dealing."

The minstrel threw himself back on the seat, as if fully resolved to bear every extremity that could be inflicted, rather than make any further answer than he had already offered. Sir John de Walton himself seemed in some degree uncertain what might now be his best course. He felt an invincible repugnance to proceed, without due consideration, in what most people would have deemed the direct line of his duty, by inflicting the torture both upon father and son; but deep as was his sense of devotion towards the king, and numerous as were the hopes and expectations he had formed upon the strict discharge of his present high trust, he could not resolve upon having recourse at once to this cruel method of cutting the knot. Bertram's appearance was venerable, and his power of words not unworthy of his aspect and bearing. The governor remembered that Aymer de Valence, whose judgment in general it was impossible to deny, had described him as one of those rare individuals, who vindicated the honour of a corrupted profession by their personal good behaviour; and

he acknowledged to himself, that there was gross cruelty and injustice in refusing to admit the prisoner to the credit of being a true and honest man, until, by way of proving his rectitude, he had strained every sinew, and crushed every joint in his body, as well as those of his son. "I have no touchstone," he said internally, "which can distinguish truth from falsehood; the Bruce and his followers are on the alert — he has certainly equipped the galleys which lay at Rachrin during winter. This story, too, of Greenleaf, about arms being procured for a new insurrection, tallies strangely with the appearance of that savage-looking forester at the hunt; and all tends to show, that something is upon the anvil which it is my duty to provide against. I will, therefore, pass over no circumstance by which I can affect the mind through hope or fear; but, please God to give me light from any other source, I will not think it lawful to torment these unfortunate and, it may yet be, honest men." He accordingly took his departure from the library, whispering a word to Greenleaf respecting the prisoner.

He had reached the outward door of the study, and his satellites had already taken the minstrel into their grasp, when the voice of the old man was heard calling upon De Walton to return for a single moment.

"What hast thou to say, sir?" said the governor. "Be speedy, for I have already lost more time in listening to thee than I am answerable for, and so I advise thee for thine own sake" ——

"I advise thee," said the minstrel, "for thine own sake, Sir John de Walton, to beware how thou dost insist on thy present purpose, by which

thou thyself alone, of all men living, will most severely suffer. If thou harmest a hair of that young man's head — nay, if thou permittest him to undergo any privation which it is in thy power to prevent, thou wilt, in doing so, prepare for thine own suffering a degree of agony more acute than anything else in this mortal world could cause thee. I swear by the most blessed objects of our holy religion; I call to witness that holy sepulchre, of which I have been an unworthy visitor, that I speak nothing but the truth, and that thou wilt one day testify thy gratitude for the part I am now acting. It is my interest, as well as yours, to secure you in the safe possession of this castle, although assuredly I know some things respecting it, and respecting your worship, which I am not at liberty to tell without the consent of that youth. Bring me but a note under his hand, consenting to my taking you into our mystery, and, believe me, you will soon see those clouds charmed away; since there was never a doleful uncertainty which more speedily changed to joy, or a thunder-cloud of adversity which more instantly gave way to sunshine, than would then the suspicions which appear now so formidable."

He spoke with so much earnestness as to make some impression upon Sir John de Walton, who was once more wholly at a loss to know what line his duty called upon him to pursue.

"I would most gladly," said the governor, "follow out my purpose by the gentlest means in my power; and I shall bring no further distress upon this poor lad, than thine own obstinacy and his shall appear to deserve. In the meantime, think, Sir Minstrel, that my duty has limits, and if I

slack it for a day it will become thee to exert every effort in thy power to meet my condescension. I will give thee leave to address thy son by a line under thy hand, and I will await his answer before I proceed further in this matter, which seems to be very mysterious. Meantime, if thou hast a soul to be saved, I conjure thee to speak the truth, and tell me whether the secrets of which thou seemest to be a too faithful treasurer have regard to the practices of Douglas, of Bruce, or of any in their names, against this Castle of Douglas?"

The prisoner thought a moment, and then replied: "I am aware, Sir Knight, of the severe charge under which this command is intrusted to your hands, and were it in my power to assist you, as a faithful minstrel and loyal subject, either with hand or tongue, I should feel myself called upon so to do; but so far am I from being the character your suspicions have apprehended, that I should have held it for certain that the Bruce and Douglas had assembled their followers, for the purpose of renouncing their rebellious attempts, and taking their departure for the Holy Land, but for the apparition of the forester, who, I hear, bearded you at the hunting, which impresses upon me the belief, that when so resolute a follower and henchman of the Douglas was sitting fearless among you, his master and comrades could be at no great distance — how far his intentions could be friendly to you, I must leave it to yourself to judge; only believe me thus far, that the rack, pulley, or pincers would not have compelled me to act the informer, or adviser, in a quarrel wherein I have little or no share, if I had

not been desirous of fixing the belief upon you, that you are dealing with a true man, and one who has your welfare at heart. — Meanwhile, permit me to have writing-materials, or let my own be restored, for I possess, in some degree, the higher arts of my calling; nor do I fear but that I can procure for you an explanation of these marvels, without much more loss of time."

"God grant it prove so," said the governor; "though I see not well how I can hope for so favourable a termination, and I may sustain great harm by trusting too much on the present occasion. My duty, however, requires that, in the meantime, you be removed into strict confinement."

He handed to the prisoner as he spoke the writing-materials, which had been seized upon by the archers on their first entrance, and then commanded those satellites to unhand the minstrel.

"I must, then," said Bertram, "remain subjected to all the severities of a strict captivity? But I deprecate no hardship whatever in my own person, so I may secure you from acting with a degree of rashness, of which you will all your life repent, without the means of atoning."

"No more words, minstrel," said the governor; "but since I have made my choice, perhaps a very dangerous one for myself, let us carry this spell into execution, which thou sayest is to serve me, as mariners say that oil spread upon the raging billows will assuage their fury."

CHAPTER IX.

. . . . . .

Beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
He still retains his sway,
For he is yet the Church's heir by right,
Whoever may be the lay.
Amundeville is lord by day,
But the monk is lord by night,
Nor wine nor wassel could raise a vassal
To question that friar's right.

Don Juan, Canto xvii.

THE minstrel made no vain boast of the skill which he possessed in the use of pen and ink. In fact, no priest of the time could have produced his little scroll more speedily, more neatly composed, or more fairly written, than were the lines addressed "To the youth called Augustine, son of Bertram the Minstrel."

"I have not folded this letter," said he, "nor tied it with silk, for it is not expressed so as to explain the mystery to you; nor, to speak frankly, do I think that it can convey to you any intelligence; but it may be satisfactory to show you what the letter does not contain, and that it is written from and to a person who both mean kindly towards you and your garrison."

"That," said the governor, "is a deception which is easily practised: it tends, however, to show, though not with certainty, that you are disposed to act upon good faith; and, until the contrary appear, I shall consider it a point of duty to treat you with as much gentleness as the matter admits of. Mean-

time, I will myself ride to the Abbey of St. Bride, and in person examine the young prisoner; and as you say he has the power, so I pray to Heaven he may have the will, to read this riddle, which seems to throw us all into confusion." So saying, he ordered his horse, and while it was getting ready he perused with great composure the minstrel's letter. Its contents ran thus:—

"DEAR AUGUSTINE, — Sir John de Walton, the governor of this castle, has conceived those suspicions which I pointed out as likely to be the consequence of our coming to this country without an avowed errand. I at least am seized, and threatened with examination under torture, to force me to tell the purpose of our journey; but they shall tear my flesh from my bones ere they force me to break the oath which I have taken. And the purport of this letter is to apprise you of the danger in which you stand of being placed in similar circumstances, unless you are disposed to authorise me to make the discovery to this knight; but on this subject you have only to express your own wishes, being assured they shall be in every respect attended to by your devoted

"BERTRAM."

This letter did not throw the smallest light upon the mystery of the writer. The governor read it more than once, and turned it repeatedly in his hand, as if he had hoped by that mechanical process to draw something from the missive which at a first view the words did not express; but, as no result of this sort appeared, De Walton retired to the hall, where he informed Sir Aymer de Valence that he was going abroad as far as the Abbey of St. Bride, and that he would be obliged by his taking upon him the duties of governor during his

absence. Sir Aymer, of course, intimated his acquiescence in the charge; and the state of disunion in which they stood to each other permitted no further explanation.

Upon the arrival of Sir John de Walton at the dilapidated shrine, the abbot, with trembling haste, made it his business immediately to attend the commander of the English garrison, upon whom, for the present, their house depended for every indulgence they experienced, as well as for the subsistence and protection necessary to them in so perilous a period. Having interrogated this old man respecting the youth residing in the abbey, De Walton was informed that he had been indisposed since left there by his father, Bertram, a minstrel. It appeared to the abbot that his indisposition might be of that contagious kind which, at that period, ravaged the English Borders, and made some incursions into Scotland, where it afterwards worked a fearful progress. After some further conversation, Sir John de Walton put into the abbot's hand the letter to the young person under his roof, on delivering which to Augustine the reverend father was charged with a message to the English governor, so bold, that he was afraid to be the bearer of it. It signified, that the youth could not, and would not, at that moment, receive the English knight; but that, if he came back on the morrow after mass, it was probable he might learn something of what was requested.

"This is not an answer," said Sir John de Walton, "to be sent by a boy like this to a person in my charge; and methinks, Father Abbot, you consult your own safety but slenderly in delivering such an insolent message."

The abbot trembled under the folds of his large coarse habit; and De Walton, imagining that his discomposure was the consequence of guilty fear, called upon him to remember the duties which he owed to England, the benefits which he had received from himself, and the probable consequence of taking part in a pert boy's insolent defiance of the power of the governor of the province.

The abbot vindicated himself from these charges with the utmost anxiety. He pledged his sacred word that the inconsiderate character of the boy's message was owing to the waywardness arising from indisposition. He reminded the governor that, as a Christian and an Englishman, he had duties to observe towards the community of St. Bride, which had never given the English government the least subject of complaint. As he spoke, the churchman seemed to gather courage from the immunities of his order. He said he could not permit a sick boy, who had taken refuge within the sanctuary of the church, to be seized or subjected to any species of force, unless he was accused of a specific crime, capable of being immediately proved. The Douglases, a headstrong race, had, in former days, uniformly respected the sanctuary of St. Bride, and it was not to be supposed that the King of England, the dutiful and obedient child of the Church of Rome, would act with less veneration for her rights than the followers of a usurper, homicide, and excommunicated person like Robert Bruce.

Walton was considerably shaken with this remonstrance. He knew that, in the circumstances of the times, the Pope had great power in every controversy in which it was his pleasure to interfere.

He knew that, even in the dispute respecting the supremacy of Scotland, his Holiness had set up a claim to the kingdom which, in the temper of the times, might perhaps have been deemed superior both to that of Robert Bruce and that of Edward of England, and he conceived his monarch would give him little thanks for any fresh embroilment which might take place with the Church. Moreover, it was easy to place a watch, so as to prevent Augustine from escaping during the night; and on the following morning he would be still as effectually in the power of the English governor as if he were seized on by open force at the present moment. Sir John de Walton, however, so far exerted his authority over the abbot that he engaged, in consideration of the sanctuary being respected for this space of time, that, when it expired, he would be aiding and assisting with his spiritual authority to surrender the youth, should he not allege a sufficient reason to the contrary. This arrangement, which appeared still to flatter the governor with the prospect of an easy termination of this troublesome dispute, induced him to grant the delay which Augustine rather demanded than petitioned for.

"At your request, Father Abbot, whom I have hitherto found a true man, I will indulge this youth with the grace he asks, before taking him into custody, understanding that he shall not be permitted to leave this place; and thou art to be responsible to this effect, giving thee, as is reasonable, power to command our little garrison at Hazelside, to which I will send a reinforcement on my return to the castle, in case it should be necessary to use the strong hand, or circumstances impose upon me other measures."

"Worthy Sir Knight," replied the abbot, "I have no idea that the frowardness of this youth will render any course necessary, saving that of persuasion; and I venture to say, that you yourself will in the highest degree approve of the method in which I shall acquit myself of my present trust."

The abbot went through the duties of hospitality, enumerating what simple cheer the cloister of the convent permitted him to offer to the English knight. Sir John de Walton declined the offer of refreshment, however — took a courteous leave of the churchman, and did not spare his horse until the noble animal had brought him again before the Castle of Douglas. Sir Aymer de Valence met him on the drawbridge, and reported the state of the garrison to be the same in which he had left it, excepting that intimation had been received that twelve or fifteen men were expected on their way to the town of Lanark, and, being on march from the neighbourhood of Ayr, would that night take up their quarters at the outpost of Hazelside.

"I am glad of it," replied the governor. "I was about to strengthen that detachment. This stripling, the son of Bertram the minstrel, or whoever he is, has engaged to deliver himself up for examination in the morning. As this party of soldiers are followers of your uncle, Lord Pembroke, may I request you will ride to meet them, and command them to remain at Hazelside until you make further inquiries about this youth, who has still to clear up the mystery which hangs about him, and reply to a letter which I delivered with my own hand to the Abbot of St. Bride. I have shown too much forbearance in this matter, and I

trust to your looking to the security of this young man, and convey him hither, with all due care and attention, as being a prisoner of some importance."

"Certainly, Sir John," answered Sir Aymer; "your orders shall be obeyed, since you have none of greater importance for one who hath the honour to be second only to yourself in this place."

"I crave your mercy, Sir Aymer," returned the governor, "if the commission be in any degree beneath your dignity; but it is our misfortune to misunderstand each other, when we endeavour to be most intelligible."

"But what am I to do," said Sir Aymer — "no way disputing your command, but only asking for information — what am I to do, if the Abbot of St. Bride offers opposition?"

"How!" answered Sir John de Walton. "With the reinforcement from my Lord of Pembroke, you will command at least twenty warmen, with bow and spear, against five or six timid old monks, with only gown and hood."

"True," said Sir Aymer, "but ban and excommunication are sometimes, in the present day, too hard for the mail coat, and I would not willingly be thrown out of the pale of the Christian Church."

"Well, then, thou very suspicious and scrupulous young man," replied De Walton, "know that if this youth does not deliver himself up to thee of his own accord, the abbot has promised to put him into thy hands."

There was no further answer to be made, and De Valence, though still thinking himself unnecessarily harassed with the charge of a petty commission, took the sort of half-arms which were always used when the knights stirred beyond the walls of the

garrison, and proceeded to execute the commands of De Walton. A horseman or two, together with his squire Fabian, accompanied him.

The evening closed in with one of those Scottish mists which are commonly said to be equal to the showers of happier climates; the path became more and more dark, the hills more wreathed in vapours, and more difficult to traverse; and all the little petty inconveniences which rendered travelling through the district slow and uncertain were augmented by the density of the fog which overhung everything.

Sir Aymer, therefore, occasionally mended his pace, and often incurred the fate of one who is over-late, delaying himself by his efforts to make greater expedition. The knight bethought himself that he would get into a straight road by passing through the almost deserted town of Douglas — the inhabitants of which had been treated so severely by the English, in the course of those fierce troubles, that most of them who were capable of bearing arms had left it, and withdrawn themselves to different parts of the country. This almost deserted place was defended by a rude palisade, and a ruder drawbridge, which gave entrance into streets so narrow as to admit with difficulty three horses abreast, and evincing with what strictness the ancient lords of the village adhered to their prejudice against fortifications, and their opinion in favour of keeping the field, so quaintly expressed in the well-known proverb of the family — "It is better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep." The streets, or rather the lanes, were dark, but for a shifting gleam of moonlight, which, as that planet began to rise, was now and then visible upon some steep and narrow gable. No sound of domestic

industry or domestic festivity was heard, and no ray of candle or firelight glanced from the windows of the houses; the ancient ordinance called the curfew, which the Conqueror had introduced into England, was at this time in full force in such parts of Scotland as were thought doubtful, and likely to rebel; under which description it need not be said the ancient possessions of the Douglas were most especially regarded. The church, whose Gothic monuments were of a magnificent character, had been, as far as possible, destroyed by fire; but the ruins, held together by the weight of the massive stones of which they were composed, still sufficiently evinced the greatness of the family at whose cost it had been raised, and whose bones, from immemorial time, had been entombed in its crypts.

Paying little attention to these relics of departed splendour, Sir Aymer de Valence advanced with his small detachment, and had passed the scattered fragments of the cemetery of the Douglases, when, to his surprise, the noise of his horse's feet was seemingly replied to by sounds which rung like those of another knightly steed advancing heavily up the street, as if it were to meet him. Valence was unable to conjecture what might be the cause of these warlike sounds; the ring and the clang of armour was distinct, and the heavy tramp of a war-horse was not to be mistaken by the ear of a warrior. The difficulty of keeping soldiers from straying out of quarters by night would have sufficiently accounted for the appearance of a straggling foot-soldier; but it was more difficult to account for a mounted horseman, in full armour; and such was the apparition which a peculiarly

bright glimpse of moonlight now showed at the bottom of the causewayed hill. Perhaps the unknown warrior obtained at the same time a glance of Aymer de Valence and his armed followers — at least each of them shouted "Who goes there?" — the alarm of the times; and on the instant the deep answers of "St. George!" on the one side, and "The Douglas!" on the other, awakened the still echoes of the small and ruinous street, and the silent arches of the dilapidated church. Astonished at a war-cry with which so many recollections were connected, the English knight spurred his horse at full gallop down the steep and broken descent leading out at the south or south-east gate of the town; and it was the work of an instant to call out, "Ho! St. George! upon the insolent villain all of you! — To the gate, Fabian, and cut him off from flight! St. George! I say, for England! Bows and bills! — bows and bills!" At the same time Aymer de Valence laid in rest his own long lance, which he snatched from the squire by whom it was carried. But the light was seen and gone in an instant, and, though De Valence concluded that the hostile warrior had hardly room to avoid his career, yet he could take no aim for the encounter, unless by mere guess, and continued to plunge down the dark declivity, among shattered stones and other incumbrances, without groping out with his lance the object of his pursuit. He rode, in short, at a broken gallop, a descent of about fifty or sixty yards, without having any reason to suppose that he had met the figure which had appeared to him, although the narrowness of the street scarcely admitted his having passed him, unless both horse and horseman could have melted

at the moment of encounter like an air-bubble The riders of his suite, meanwhile, were struck with a feeling like supernatural terror which a number of singular adventures had caused most of them to attach to the name of Douglas; and when he reached the gate by which the broken street was terminated, there was none close behind him but Fabian, in whose head no suggestions of a timorous nature could outlive the sound of his dear master's voice.

Here there was a post of English archers, who were turning out in considerable alarm, when De Valence and his page rode in amongst them. "Villains!" shouted De Valence, "why were ye not upon your duty? Who was it passed through your post even now, with the traitorous cry of Douglas?"

"We know of no such," said the captain of the watch.

"That is to say, you besotted villains," answered the young knight, "you have been drinking, and have slept?"

The men protested the contrary, but in a confused manner, which was far from overcoming De Valence's suspicions. He called loudly to bring cressets, torches, and candles; and a few remaining inhabitants began to make their unwilling appearance, with such various means of giving light as they chanced to possess. They heard the story of the young English knight with wonder; nor, although it was confirmed by all his retinue, did they give credit to the recital, more than that the Englishmen wished somehow or other to pick a quarrel with the people of the place, under the pretence of their having admitted a retainer of their ancient lord by night into the town. They protested, therefore,

their innocence of the cause of tumult, and endeavoured to seem active in hastening from house to house, and corner to corner, with their torches, in order to discover the invisible cavalier. The English suspected them no less of treachery than the Scottish imagined the whole matter a pretext for bringing an accusation, on the part of the young knight, against the citizens. The women, however, who now began to issue from the houses, had a key for the solution of the apparition, which at that time was believed of efficacy sufficient to solve any mystery. "The devil," they said, "must have appeared visibly amongst them," an explanation which had already occurred to the followers of the young knight; for that a living man and horse, both, as it seemed, of a gigantic size, could be conjured in the twinkling of an eye, and appear in a street secured at one end by the best of the archers, and at the other by the horsemen under Valence himself, was altogether, it seemed, a thing impossible. The inhabitants did not venture to put their thoughts on the subject into language, for fear of giving offence, and only indicated by a passing word to each other the secret degree of pleasure which they felt in the confusion and embarrassment of the English garrison. Still, however, they continued to affect a great deal of interest in the alarm which De Valence had received, and the anxiety which he expressed to discover the cause.

At length a female voice spoke above the Babel of confused sounds, saying, "Where is the Southern Knight? I am sure that I can tell him where he can find the only person who can help him out of his present difficulty."

"And who is that, good woman?" said Aymer de

Valence, who was growing every moment more impatient at the loss of time, which was flying fast, in an investigation which had something in it vexatious, and even ridiculous. At the same time, the sight of an armed partisan of the Douglases, in their own native town, seemed to bode too serious consequences, if it should be suffered to pass without being probed to the bottom.

"Come hither to me," said the female voice, "and I will name to you the only person who can explain all matters of this kind that chance in this country." On this the knight snatched a torch from some of those who were present, and holding it up, descried the person who spoke, a tall woman, who evidently endeavoured to render herself remarkable. When he approached her, she communicated her intelligence in a grave and sententious tone of voice.

"We had once wise men, that could have answered any parables which might have been put to them for explanation in this country side. Whether you yourselves, gentlemen, have not had some hand in weeding them out, good troth, it is not for the like of me to say; at any rate, good counsel is not so easy come by as it was in this Douglas country, nor, may be, is it a safe thing to pretend to the power of giving it."

"Good woman," said De Valence, "if you will give me an explanation of this mystery, I will owe you a kirtle of the best raploch grey."

"It is not I," said the old woman, "that pretend to possess the knowledge which may assist you; but I would fain know that the man whom I shall name to you shall be skaithless and harmless. Upon your knighthood and your honour, will you promise to me so much?"

"Assuredly," said De Valence, "such a person shall even have thanks and reward, if he is a faithful informer; ay, and pardon, moreover, although he may have listened to any dangerous practices, or been concerned in any plots."

"Oh! not he," replied the female: "it is old Goodman Powheid, who has the charge of the muniments" (meaning probably monuments) — "that is, such part of them as you English have left standing; I mean the old sexton of the kirk of Douglas, who can tell more stories of these old folk, whom your honour is not very fond of hearing named, than would last us from this day to Yule."

"Does anybody," said the knight, "know whom it is that this old woman means?"

"I conjecture," replied Fabian, "that she speaks of an old dotard, who is, I think, the general referee concerning the history and antiquities of this old town, and of the savage family that lived here, perhaps before the flood."

"And who, I dare say," said the knight, "knows as much about the matter as she herself does. But where is this man? — a sexton, is he? He may be acquainted with places of concealment, which are often fabricated in Gothic buildings, and known to those whose business calls them to frequent them. Come, my good old dame, bring this man to me; or, what may be better, I will go to him, for we have already spent too much time."

"Time!" replied the old woman. "Is time an object with your honour? I am sure I can hardly get so much for mine as will hold soul and body together. You are not far from the old man's house."

She led the way accordingly, blundering over

heaps of rubbish, and encountering all the embarrassments of a ruinous street, in lighting the way to Sir Aymer, who, giving his horse to one of his attendants, and desiring Fabian to be ready at a call, scrambled after as well as the slowness of his guide would permit.

Both were soon involved in the remains of the old church, much dilapidated as it had been by wanton damage done to it by the soldiery, and so much impeded by rubbish that the knight marvelled how the old woman could find the way. She kept talking all the while as she stumbled onward. Sometimes she called out in a screeching tone, "Powheid! Lazarus Powheid!" and then muttered, "Ay, ay, the old man will be busy with some of his duties, as he calls them; I wonder he fashes wi' them in these times. But never mind, I warrant they will last for his day, and for mine; and the times, Lord help us! for all that I can see, are well enough for those that are to live in them."

"Are you sure, good woman," replied the knight, "that there is any inhabitant in these ruins? For my part, I should rather suppose that you are taking me to the charnel-house of the dead."

"Maybe you are right," said the old woman, with a ghastly laugh; "carles and carlines agree weel with funeral vaults and charnel-houses, and when an auld bedral dwells near the dead, he is living, ye ken, among his customers — Halloo! Powheid! Lazarus Powheid! there is a gentleman would speak with you;" and she added, with some sort of emphasis, "an English noble gentleman — one of the honourable garrison."

An old man's step was now heard advancing, so slowly that the glimmering light which he held in

his hand was visible on the ruined walls of the vault some time before it showed the person who bore it.

The shadow of the old man was also projected upon the illuminated wall ere his person came in view; his dress was in considerable confusion, owing to his having been roused from his bed; and since artificial light was forbidden by the regulations of the garrison, the natives of Douglas Dale spent in sleep the time that they could not very well get rid of by any other means. The sexton was a tall thin man, emaciated by years and by privations; his body was bent habitually by his occupation of grave-digging, and his eye naturally inclined downwards to the scene of his labours. His hand sustained the cruise or little lamp, which he held so as to throw light upon his visitant; at the same time it displayed to the young knight the features of the person with whom he was now confronted, which, though neither handsome nor pleasing, were strongly marked, sagacious, and venerable, indicating, at the same time, a certain air of dignity, which age, even mere poverty, may be found occasionally to bestow, as conferring that last melancholy species of independence proper to those whose situation can hardly, by any imaginable means, be rendered much worse than years and fortune have already made it. The habit of a lay brother added somewhat of religious importance to his appearance.

"What would you with me, young man?" said the sexton. "Your youthful features, and your gay dress, bespeak one who stands in need of my ministry neither for himself nor for others."

"I am, indeed," replied the knight, "a living man, and therefore need not either shovel or pick-

axe for my own behoof. I am not, as you see, attired in mourning, and therefore need not your offices in behalf of any friend; I would only ask you a few questions."

"What you would have done must needs be done, you being at present one of our rulers, and, as I think, a man of authority," replied the sexton. "Follow me this way into my poor habitation! I have had a better in my day; and yet, Heaven knows, it is good enough for me, when many men of much greater consequence must perforce content themselves with worse."

He opened a lowly door, which was fitted, though irregularly, to serve as the entrance of a vaulted apartment, where it appeared that the old man held, apart from the living world, his wretched and solitary dwelling.[1] The floor, composed of paving-stones, laid together with some accuracy, and here and there inscribed with letters and hieroglyphics, as if they had once upon a time served to distinguish sepulchres, was indifferently well swept, and a fire at the upper end directed its smoke into a hole which served for a chimney. The spade and pick-axe (with other tools), which the chamberlain of mortality makes use of, lay scattered about the apartment, and, with a rude stool or two, and a table, where some inexperienced hand had unquestionably supplied the labours of the joiner, were nearly the only furniture, if we include the old man's bed of straw, lying in a corner, and discomposed, as if he had been just raised from it. At the

[1] [This is a most graphic and accurate description of the present state of the ruin. Its being occupied by the sexton as a dwelling-place, and the whole scene of the old man's interview with De Valence, may be classed with our illustrious author's most felicitous imaginings. — *Note by the Rev. Mr. Stewart of Douglas.*]

lower end of the apartment the wall was almost entirely covered by a large escutcheon, such as is usually hung over the graves of men of very high rank, having the appropriate quarters, to the number of sixteen, each properly blazoned and distinct, placed as ornaments around the principal armorial coat itself.

"Let us sit," said the old man; "the posture will better enable my failing ears to apprehend your meaning, and the asthma will deal with me more mercifully in permitting me to make you understand mine."

A peal of short asthmatic coughs attested the violence of the disorder which he had last named, and the young knight followed his host's example, in sitting down on one of the rickety stools by the side of the fire. The old man brought from one corner of the apartment an apron, which he occasionally wore, full of broken boards in irregular pieces, some of which were covered with black cloth, or driven full of nails, black, as it might happen, or gilded.

"You will find this fresh fuel necessary," said the old man, "to keep some degree of heat within this waste apartment; nor are the vapours of mortality, with which this vault is apt to be filled, if the fire is permitted to become extinct, indifferent to the lungs of the dainty and the healthy, like your worship, though to me they are become habitual. The wood will catch fire, although it is some time ere the damps of the grave are overcome by the drier air and the warmth of the chimney."

Accordingly, the relics of mortality with which the old man had heaped his fireplace began by degrees to send forth a thick unctuous vapour, which

at length leaped to light, and, blazing up the aperture, gave a degree of liveliness to the gloomy scene. The blazonry of the huge escutcheon met and returned the rays with as brilliant a reflection as that lugubrious object was capable of, and the whole apartment looked with a fantastic gaiety, strangely mingled with the gloomy ideas which its ornaments were calculated to impress upon the imagination.

"You are astonished," said the old man, "and perhaps, Sir Knight, you have never before seen these relics of the dead applied to the purpose of rendering the living, in some degree, more comfortable than their condition would otherwise admit of."

"Comfortable!" returned the Knight of Valence, shrugging his shoulders. "I should be sorry, old man, to know that I had a dog that was as indifferently quartered as thou art, whose grey hairs have certainly seen better days."

"It may be," answered the sexton, "and it may be otherwise; but it was not, I presume, concerning my own history that your worship seemed disposed to ask me some questions; and I would venture to inquire, therefore, to whom they have relation?"

"I will speak plainly to you," replied Sir Aymer, "and you will at once acknowledge the necessity of giving a short and distinct reply. I have even now met in the streets of this village a person only shown to me by a single flash of light, who had the audacity to display the armorial insignia and utter the war-cry of the Douglases; nay, if I could trust a transient glance, this daring cavalier had the features and the dark complexion proper to

the Douglas. I am referred to thee as to one who possesses means of explaining this extraordinary circumstance, which, as an English knight, and one holding a charge under King Edward, I am particularly called upon to make inquiry into."

"Let me make a distinction," said the old man "The Douglases of former generations are my near neighbours, and, according to my superstitious townsmen, my acquaintances and visitors; I can take it upon my conscience to be answerable for their good behaviour, and to become bound that none of the old barons, to whom the roots of that mighty tree may, it is said, be traced, will again disturb with their war-cry the towns or villages of their native country — not one will parade in moonshine the black armour which has long rusted upon their tombs.

> The knights are dust,
> And their good swords are rust;
> Their souls are with the saints, we trust. [1]

Look around, Sir Knight, you have above and around you the men of whom we speak. Beneath us, in a little aisle (which hath not been opened since these thin grey locks were thick and brown), there lies the first man whom I can name as memorable among those of this mighty line. It is he whom the Thane of Athol pointed out to the King of Scotland as Sholto Dhuglass, or the dark iron-coloured man, whose exertions had gained the battle for his native prince; and who, according to this legend, bequeathed his name to our dale and town, though others say that the race assumed the name of Douglas from the stream so called

[1] Note II. — Coleridge.

in unrecorded times, before they had their fastness on its banks. Others, his descendants, called Eachain, or Hector the first, and Orodh, or Hugh, William, the first of that name, and Gilmour, the theme of many a minstrel song, commemorating achievements done under the oriflamme of Charles the Great, Emperor of France, have all consigned themselves to their last sleep, nor has their memory been sufficiently preserved from the waste of time. Something we know concerning their great deeds, their great power, and, alas! their great crimes. Something we also know of a Lord of Douglas who sat in a parliament at Forfar, held by King Malcolm the First, and we are aware that, from his attachment to hunting the wild hart, he built himself a tower called Blackhouse, (*e*) in the forest of Ettrick, which perhaps still exists."

"I crave your forgiveness, old man," said the knight, "but I have no time at present to bestow upon the recitation of the pedigree of the House of Douglas. A less matter would hold a well-breathed minstrel in subject for recitation for a calendar month, Sundays and holidays included."

"What other information can you expect from me," said the sexton, "than that respecting those heroes, some of whom it has been my lot to consign to that eternal rest, which will for ever divide the dead from the duties of this world? I have told you where the race sleep, down to the reign of the royal Malcolm. I can tell you also of another vault, in which lie Sir John of Douglasburn, with his son Lord Archibald, and a third William, known by an indenture with Lord Abernethy. Lastly, I can tell you of him to whom that escutcheon, with its appurtenances of splen-

dour and dignity, justly belong. Do you envy that nobleman, whom, if death were in the sound I would not hesitate to term my honourable patron? and have you any design of dishonouring his remains? It will be a poor victory! Nor does it become a knight and nobleman to come in person to enjoy such a triumph over the dead, against whom, when he lived, there were few knights dared spur their horses. He fought in defence of his country, but he had not the good fortune of most of his ancestors, to die on the field of battle. Captivity, sickness, and regret for the misfortunes of his native land, brought his head to the grave in his prison-house, in the land of the stranger."

The old man's voice here became interrupted by emotion, and the English knight found it difficult to continue his examination in the stern fashion which his duty required.

"Old man," he said, "I do not require from thee this detail, which must be useless to me, as well as painful to thyself. Thou dost but thy duty in rendering justice to thy ancient lord; but thou hast not yet explained to me why I have met in this town, this very night, and not half an hour since, a person in the arms, and bearing the complexion, of one of the Black Douglases, who cried his war-cry as if in contempt of his conquerors."

"Surely," replied the sexton, "it is not my business to explain such a fancy, otherwise than by supposing that the natural fears of the Southron will raise the spectre of a Douglas at any time, when he is within sight of their sepulchre. Methinks, in such a night as this, the fairest cavalier would wear the complexion of this swarthy race; nor can I hold it wonderful that the war-cry which was once

in the throats of so many thousands in this country, should issue upon occasion from the mouth of a single champion."

"You are bold, old man," returned the English knight. "Do you consider that your life is in my power, and that it may, in certain cases, be my duty to inflict death with that degree of pain at which humanity shudders?"

The old man rose up slowly in the light of the blazing fire, displaying his emaciated features, which resembled those ascribed by artists to St. Anthony of the desert, and, pointing to the feeble lamp, which he placed upon the coarse table, thus addressed his interrogator, with an appearance of perfect firmness, and something even resembling dignity: —

"Young knight of England, you see that utensil constructed for the purpose of dispensing light amidst these fatal vaults, — it is as frail as anything can well be, whose flame is supplied by living element, contained in a frame composed of iron. It is doubtless in your power entirely to end its service, by destroying the frame, or extinguishing the light. Threaten it with such annihilation, Sir Knight, and see whether your menace will impress any sense of fear either on the element or the iron. Know that you have no more power over the frail mortal whom you threaten with similar annihilation. You may tear from my body the skin in which it is now swathed, but although my nerves might glow with agony during the inhuman operation, it would produce no more impression on me than flaying on the stag which an arrow has previously pierced through the heart. My age sets me beyond your cruelty: if you think otherwise, call your agents, and commence your operations;

neither threats nor inflictions will enable you to extort from me anything that I am not ready to tell you of my own accord."

"You trifle with me, old man," said De Valence; "you talk as if you possessed some secret respecting the motions of these Douglases, who are to you as gods, yet you communicate no intelligence to me whatever."

"You may soon know," replied the old man. "all that a poor sexton has to communicate; and it will not increase your knowledge respecting the living, though it may throw some light upon my proper domains, which are those of the dead. The spirits of the deceased Douglases do not rest in their graves during the dishonour of their monuments, and the downfall of their house. That, upon death, the greater part of any line are consigned to the regions of eternal bliss, or of never-ending misery, religion will not suffer us to believe, and, amidst a race who had so great a share of worldly triumph and prosperity, we must suppose there have existed many who have been justly subjected to the doom of an intermediate space of punishment. You have destroyed the temples which were built by their posterity to propitiate Heaven for the welfare of their souls; you have silenced the prayers and stopped the choirs, by the mediation of which the piety of children had sought to appease the wrath of Heaven in behalf of their ancestors, subjected to expiatory fires. Can you wonder that the tormented spirits, thus deprived of the relief which had been proposed to them, should not, according to the common phrase, rest in their graves? Can you wonder they should show themselves like discontented loiterers near to the places which, but

for the manner in which you have prosecuted your remorseless warfare, might have ere now afforded them rest? Or do you marvel that these fleshless warriors should interrupt your marches, and do what else their airy nature may permit to disturb your councils, and meet as far as they may the hostilities which you make it your boast to carry on, as well against those who are deceased, as against any who may yet survive your cruelty?"

"Old man," replied Aymer de Valence, "you cannot expect that I am to take for answer a story like this, being a fiction too gross to charm to sleep a schoolboy tormented with the toothache; nevertheless, I thank God that thy doom does not remain in my hands. My squire and two archers shall carry thee captive to the worshipful Sir John de Walton, Governor of the Castle and Valley, that he may deal with thee as seems meet; nor is he a person to believe in your apparitions and ghosts from purgatory. — What ho! Fabian! Come hither, and bring with thee two archers of the guard."

Fabian accordingly, who had waited at the entrance of the ruined building, now found his way, by the light of the old sexton's lamp, and the sound of his master's voice, into the singular apartment of the old man, the strange decorations of which struck the youth with great surprise, and some horror.

"Take the two archers with thee, Fabian," said the Knight of Valence, "and, with their assistance, convey this old man, on horseback, or in a litter, to the presence of the worshipful Sir John de Walton. Tell him what we have seen, which thou didst witness as well as I; and tell him that this old sexton, whom I send to be examined by his superior wis-

dom, seems to know more than he is willing to disclose respecting our ghostly cavalier, though he will give us no account of him, except intimating that he is a spirit of the old Douglases from purgatory, to which Sir John de Walton will give what faith he pleases. You may say that, for my part, my belief is, either that the sexton is crazed by age, want, and enthusiasm, or that he is connected with some plot which the country people are hatching. You may also say that I shall not use much ceremony with the youth under the care of the Abbot of St. Bride; there is something suspicious in all the occurrences that are now passing around us."

Fabian promised obedience; and the knight, pulling him aside, gave him an additional caution, to behave with attention in this business, seeing he must recollect that neither the judgment of himself nor that of his master was apparently held in very much esteem by the governor; and that it would ill become them to make any mistake in a matter where the safety of the castle was perhaps concerned.

"Fear me not, worshipful sir," replied the youth; "I am returning to pure air in the first place, and a good fire in the second, both acceptable exchanges for this dungeon of suffocating vapours and execrable smells. You may trust to my making no delay; a very short time will carry me back to Castle Douglas, even moving with suitable attention to this old man's bones."

"Use him humanely," answered the knight. "And thou, old man, if thou art insensible to threats of personal danger in this matter, remember, that if thou art found paltering with us, thy

punishment will perhaps be more severe than any we can inflict upon thy person."

"Can you administer the torture to the soul?" said the sexton.

"As to thee," answered the knight, "we have that power; — we will dissolve every monastery or religious establishment held for the souls of these Douglases, and will only allow the religious people to hold their residence there, upon condition of their praying for the soul of King Edward the First of glorious memory, the *malleus Scotorum;* and if the Douglases are deprived of the ghostly benefit of the prayers and services of such shrines, they may term thy obstinacy the cause."

"Such a species of vengeance," answered the old man, in the same bold unsubdued tone which he had hitherto used, "were more worthy of the infernal fiends than of Christian men."

The squire raised his hand. The knight interposed: "Forbear him," he said, "Fabian, he is very old, and perhaps insane. — And you, sexton, remember that the vengeance threatened is lawfully directed towards a family which have been the obstinate supporters of the excommunicated rebel who murdered the Red Comyn at the High Church in Dumfries."

So saying, Aymer strode out of the ruins, picking his way with some difficulty — took his horse, which he found at the entrance — repeated a caution to Fabian, to conduct himself with prudence — and, passing on to the south-western gate, gave the strongest injunctions concerning the necessity of keeping a vigilant watch, both by patrols and by sentinels, intimating, at the same time, that it must have been neglected during the preceding part of

the evening. The men murmured an apology, the confusion of which seemed to express that there had existed some occasion for the reprimand.

Sir Aymer then proceeded on his journey to Hazelside, his train diminished by the absence of Fabian and his assistants. After a hasty but not a short journey, the knight alighted at Thomas Dickson's, where he found the detachment from Ayr had arrived before him, and were snugly housed for the night. He sent one of the archers to announce his approach to the Abbot of St. Bride and his young guest, intimating, at the same time, that the archer must keep sight of the latter until he himself arrived at the chapel, which would be instantly.

CHAPTER X.

When the nightengale singes, the wodes waxen grene,
Lef, and gras, and blosme, springeth in April I wene,
And love is to myne herte gone with one speare so kene.
Night and day my blood hyt drynkes, mine herte deth me tene.

MSS. Hail. Quoted by Warton.

Sir Aymer de Valence had no sooner followed his archer to the convent of St. Bride, than he summoned the abbot to his presence, who came with the air of a man who loves his ease, and who is suddenly called from the couch where he has consigned himself to a comfortable repose, at the summons of one whom he does not think it safe to disobey, and to whom he would not disguise his sense of peevishness, if he durst.

"It is a late ride," he said, "which has brought your worthy honour hither from the castle. May I be informed of the cause, after the arrangement so recently gone into with the governor?"

"It is my hope," replied the knight, "that you, Father Abbot, are not already conscious of it. Suspicions are afloat, and I myself have this night seen something to confirm them, that some of the obstinate rebels of this country are again setting afoot dangerous practices, to the peril of the garrison; and I come, father, to see whether, in requital of many favours received from the English monarch, you will not merit his bounty and protection, by contributing to the discovery of the designs of his enemies."

"Assuredly so," answered Father Jerome, in an agitated voice. "Most unquestionably my information should stand at your command; that is, if I knew anything the communication of which could be of advantage to you."

"Father Abbot," replied the English knight, "although it is rash to make myself responsible for a North-country man in these times, yet I own I do consider you as one who has ever been faithfully subject to the King of England, and I willingly hope that you will still continue so."

"And a fine encouragement I have!" said the abbot; "to be called out of my bed at midnight, in this raw weather, to undergo the examination of a knight, who is the youngest, perhaps, of his own honourable rank, and who will not tell me the subject of the interrogatories, but detains me on this cold pavement, till, according to the opinion of Celsus, the podagra which lurks in my feet may be driven into my stomach, and then good-night to abbacy and examinations from henceforward."

"Good father," said the young man, "the spirit of the times must teach thee patience; recollect that I can feel no pleasure in this duty, and that, if an insurrection should take place, the rebels, who are sufficiently displeased with thee for acknowledging the English monarch, would hang thee from thine own steeple to feed the crows; or that, if thou hast secured thy peace by some private compact with the insurgents, the English governor, who will sooner or later gain the advantage, will not fail to treat thee as a rebel to his sovereign."

"It may appear to you, my noble son," answered the abbot, obviously discomposed, "that I am hung up, in this case, on the horns of the dilemma which

you have stated; nevertheless, I protest to you, that if any one accuses me of conspiring with the rebels against the King of England, I am ready, provided you give me time to swallow a potion recommended by Celsus in my perilous case, to answer with the most perfect sincerity every question which thou canst put to me upon that subject." So saying, he called upon a monk who had attended at his levée, and, giving him a large key, whispered something in his ear. The cup which the monk brought was of such capacity as proved Celsus's draught required to be administered in considerable quantity, and a strong smell which it spread through the apartment accredited the knight's suspicion that the medicine chiefly consisted of what were then termed distilled waters, a preparation known in the monasteries for some time before that comfortable secret had reached the laity in general. The abbot, neither overawed by the strength nor by the quantity of the potion, took it off with what he himself would have called a feeling of solace and pleasance, and his voice became much more composed; he signified himself as comforted extraordinarily by the medicine, and willing to proceed to answer any questions which could be put to him by his gallant young friend.

"At present," said the knight, "you are aware, father, that strangers travelling through this country must be the first objects of our suspicions and inquiries. What is, for example, your own opinion of the youth termed Augustine, the son, or calling himself so, of a person called Bertram the minstrel, who has resided for some days in your convent?"

The abbot heard the question with eyes expressive of surprise at the quarter from which it came.

"Assuredly," said he, "I think of him as a youth who, from anything I have seen, is of that excellent disposition, both with respect to loyalty and religion, which I should have expected, were I to judge from the estimable person who committed him to my care."

With this the abbot bowed to the knight, as if he had conceived that this repartee gave him a silencing advantage in any question which could follow upon that subject; and he was probably, therefore, surprised when Sir Aymer replied as follows: —

"It is very true, Father Abbot, that I myself did recommend this stripling to you as a youth of a harmless disposition, and with respect to whom it would be unnecessary to exercise the strict vigilance extended to others in similar circumstances; but the evidence which seemed to me to vouch for this young man's innocence has not appeared so satisfactory to my superior and commander; and it is by his orders that I now make further inquiries of you. You must think they are of consequence, since we again trouble you, and at so unwonted an hour."

"I can only protest by my order, and by the veil of St. Bride," replied the abbot, the spirit of Celsus appearing to fail his pupil, "that whatever evil may be in this matter is totally unknown to me -- nor could it be extorted from me by racks or implements of torture. Whatever signs of disloyalty may have been evinced by this young man, I have witnessed none of them, although I have been strictly attentive to his behaviour."

"In what respect?" said the knight. "And what is the result of your observation?"

"My answer," said the abbot of St. Bride, "shall be sincere and downright. The youth condescended upon payment of a certain number of gold crowns, not by any means to repay the hospitality of the church of St. Bride, but merely"——

"Nay, father," interrupted the knight, "you may cut that short, since the governor and I well understand the terms upon which the monks of St. Bride exercise their hospitality. In what manner, it is more necessary to ask, was it received by this boy?"

"With the utmost gentleness and moderation, noble sir," answered the abbot; "indeed, it appeared to me, at first, that he might be a troublesome guest, since the amount of his benevolence to the convent was such as to encourage, and in some degree to authorise, his demanding accommodation of a kind superior to what we had to bestow."

"In which case," said Sir Aymer, "you would have had the discomfort of returning some part of the money you had received?"

"That," replied the abbot, "would have been a mode of settlement contrary to our vows. What is paid to the treasury of St. Bridget cannot, agreeably to our rule, be on any account restored. But, noble knight, there was no occasion for this: a crust of white bread and a draught of milk were diet sufficient to nourish this poor youth for a day; and it was my own anxiety for his health that dictated the furnishing of his cell with a softer bed and coverlet than are quite consistent with the rules of our order."

"Now hearken to what I say, Sir Abbot, and answer me truly," said the Knight of Valence. "What communication has this youth held with the inmates of your convent, or with those beyond

your house? Search your memory concerning this, and let me have a distinct answer, for your guest's safety and your own depend upon it."

"As I am a Christian man," said the abbot, "I have observed nothing which could give ground for your worship's suspicions. The boy Augustine, unlike those whom I have observed who have been educated in the world, showed a marked preference to the company of such sisters as the house of St. Bride contains, rather than for that of the monks, my brethren, although there are among them pleasant and conversible men."

"Scandal," said the young knight, "might find a reason for that preference."

"Not in the case of the sisters of St. Bridget," said the abbot, "most of whom have been either sorely misused by time, or their comeliness destroyed by some mishap previously to their being received into the seclusion of the house."

This observation the good father made with some internal movement of mirth, which was apparently excited at the idea of the sisterhood of St. Bridget becoming attractive to any one by dint of their personal beauty, in which, as it happened, they were all notably, and almost ludicrously, deficient. The English knight, to whom the sisterhood were well known, felt also inclined to smile at this conversation.

"I acquit," he said, "the pious sisterhood of charming, otherwise than by their kind wishes, and attention to the wants of the suffering stranger."

"Sister Beatrice," continued the father, resuming his gravity, "is indeed blessed with a winning gift of making comfits and syllabubs; but, on minute inquiry, I do not find that the youth has tasted any

of them. Neither is Sister Ursula so hard-favoured by nature, as from the effects of an accident; but your honour knows that when a woman is ugly the men do not trouble themselves about the cause of her hard favour. I will go, with your leave, and see in what state the youth now is, and summon him before you."

"I request you to do so, father, for the affair is instant; and I earnestly advise you to watch, in the closest manner, this Augustine's behaviour: you cannot be too particular. I will wait your return, and either carry the boy to the castle, or leave him here, as circumstances may seem to require."

The abbot bowed, promised his utmost exertions, and hobbled out of the room to wait on the youth Augustine in his cell, anxious to favour, if possible, the wishes of De Valence, whom he looked upon as rendered by circumstances his military patron.

He remained long absent, and Sir Aymer began to be of opinion that the delay was suspicious, when the abbot returned with perplexity and discomposure in his countenance.

"I crave your pardon for keeping your worship waiting," said Jerome, with much anxiety; "but I have myself been detained and vexed by unnecessary formalities and scruples on the part of this peevish boy. In the first place, hearing my foot approaching his bedroom, my youth, instead of undoing the door, which would have been but proper respect to my place, on the contrary draws a strong bolt on the inside; and this fastening, forsooth, has been placed on his chamber by Ursula's command, that his slumbers might be suitably respected. I intimated to him, as I best could, that he must attend you without delay, and prepare to accompany you to the

Castle of Douglas; but he would not answer a single word, save recommending to me patience, to which I was fain to have recourse, as well as your archer, whom I found standing sentinel before the door of the cell, and contenting himself with the assurance of the sisters that there was no other passage by which Augustine could make his escape. At length the door opens, and my young master presents himself fully arrayed for his journey. The truth is, I think some fresh attack of his malady has affected the youth; he may perhaps be disturbed with some touch of hypochondria, or black choler, a species of dotage of the mind, which is sometimes found concomitant with and symptomatic of this disorder; but he is at present composed, and if your worship chooses to see him, he is at your command."

"Call him hither," said the knight. And a considerable space of time again elapsed ere the eloquence of the abbot, half chiding and half soothing, prevailed on the lady, in her adopted character, to approach the parlour, in which at last she made her appearance, with a countenance on which the marks of tears might still be discovered, and a pettish sullenness, like that of a boy, or, with reverence, that of a girl, who is determined upon taking her own way in any matter, and equally resolved to give no reason for her doing so. Her hurried levée had not prevented her attending closely to all the mufflings and disguisings by which her pilgrim's dress was arranged, so as to alter her appearance, and effectually disguise her sex. But as civility prevented her wearing her large slouched hat, she necessarily exposed her countenance more than in the open air; and though the knight beheld a most lovely set of features, yet they were not such as were

inconsistent with the character she had adopted, and which she had resolved upon maintaining to the last. She had, accordingly, mustered up a degree of courage which was not natural to her, and which she perhaps supported by hopes which her situation hardly admitted. So soon as she found herself in the same apartment with De Valence, she assumed a style of manners, bolder and more determined than she had hitherto displayed.

"Your worship," she said, addressing him even before he spoke, "is a knight of England, and possessed, doubtless, of the virtues which become that noble station. I am an unfortunate lad, obliged, by reasons which I am under the necessity of keeping secret, to travel in a dangerous country, where I am suspected, without any just cause, of becoming accessory to plots and conspiracies which are contrary to my own interest, and which my very soul abhors; and which I might safely abjure, by imprecating upon myself all the curses of our religion and renouncing all its promises, if I were accessory to such designs, in thought, word, or deed. Nevertheless, you, who will not believe my solemn protestations, are about to proceed against me as a guilty person, and in so doing I must warn you, Sir Knight, that you will commit a great and cruel injustice."

"I shall endeavour to avoid that," said the knight, "by referring the duty to Sir John de Walton, the governor, who will decide what is to be done; in this case, my only duty will be to place you in his hands at Douglas Castle."

"Must you do this?" said Augustine.

"Certainly," replied the knight, "or be answerable for neglecting my duty."

"But if I become bound to answer your loss with a large sum of money, a large tract of land" ——

"No treasure, no land — supposing such at your disposal," answered the knight, "can atone for disgrace; and besides, boy, how should I trust to your warrant, were my avarice such as would induce me to listen to such proposals?"

"I must then prepare to attend you instantly to the Castle of Douglas and the presence of Sir John de Walton?" replied Augustine.

"Young man," answered De Valence, "there is no remedy, since, if you delay me longer, I must carry you thither by force."

"What will be the consequence to my father?" said the youth.

"That," replied the knight, "will depend exactly on the nature of your confession and his; something you both have to say, as is evident from the terms of the letter Sir John de Walton conveyed to you; and I assure you, you were better to speak it out at once than to risk the consequences of more delay. I can admit of no more trifling; and believe me that your fate will be entirely ruled by your own frankness and candour."

"I must prepare, then, to travel at your command," said the youth. "But this cruel disease still hangs around me, and Abbot Jerome, whose leechcraft is famous, will himself assure you that I cannot travel without danger of my life, and that while I was residing in this convent I declined every opportunity of exercise which was offered me by the kindness of the garrison at Hazelside, lest I might by mishap bring the contagion among your men."

"The youth says right," said the abbot: "the

archers and men-at-arms have more than once sent to invite this lad to join in some of their military games, or to amuse them, perhaps, with some of his minstrelsy; but he has uniformly declined doing so; and, according to my belief, it is the effects of this disorder which have prevented his accepting an indulgence so natural to his age, and in so dull a place as the convent of St. Bride must needs seem to a youth bred up in the world."

"Do you then hold, reverend father," said Sir Aymer, "that there is real danger in carrying this youth to the castle to-night, as I proposed?"

"I conceive such danger," replied the abbot, "to exist, not only as it may occasion the relapse of the poor youth himself, but as particularly likely, no preparations having been made, to introduce the infection among your honourable garrison; for it is in these relapses, more than in the first violence of the malady, that it has been found most contagious."

"Then," said the knight, "you must be content, my friend, to give a share of your room to an archer, by way of sentinel."

"I cannot object," said Augustine, "provided my unfortunate vicinity does not endanger the health of the poor soldier."

"He will be as ready to do his duty," said the abbot, "without the door of the apartment as within it; and if the youth should sleep soundly, which the presence of a guard in his chamber might prevent, he is the more likely to answer your purpose on the morrow."

"Let it be so," said Sir Aymer; "so you are sure that you do not minister any facility of escape."

"The apartment," said the monk, "hath no other

entrance than that which is guarded by the archer, but to content you, I shall secure the door in your presence."

"So be it, then," said the knight of Valence; "this done, I myself will lie down without doffing my mail-shirt, and snatch a sleep till the ruddy dawn calls me again to duty, when you, Augustine, will hold yourself ready to attend me to our Castle of Douglas."

The bells of the convent summoned the inhabitants and inmates of St. Bride to morning prayers at the first peep of day. When this duty was over, the knight demanded his prisoner. The abbot marshalled him to the door of Augustine's chamber. The sentinel who was stationed there, armed with a brown-bill, or species of partisan, reported that he had heard no motion in the apartment during the whole night. The abbot tapped at the door, but received no answer. He knocked again louder, but the silence was unbroken from within.

"What means this?" said the reverend ruler of the convent of St. Bride. "My young patient has certainly fallen into a syncope or swoon!"

"I wish, Father Abbot," said the knight, "that he may not have made his escape instead, an accident which both you and I may be required to answer, since, according to our strict duty, we ought to have kept sight of him, and detained him in close custody until daybreak."

"I trust your worship," said the abbot, "only anticipates a misfortune which I cannot think possible."

"We shall speedily see," said the knight; and raising his voice, he called aloud, so as to be heard within, "Bring crow-bars and levers, and burst

me that door into splinters without an instant's delay!"

The loudness of his voice, and the stern tone in which he spoke, soon brought around him the brethren of the house, and two or three soldiers of his own party, who were already busy in caparisoning their horses. The displeasure of the young knight was manifested by his flushed features, and the abrupt manner in which he again repeated his commands for breaking open the door. This was speedily performed, though it required the application of considerable strength, and as the shattered remains fell crashing into the apartment De Valence sprang, and the abbot hobbled, into the cell of the prisoner, which, to the fulfilment of their worst suspicions, they found empty.

CHAPTER XI.

Where is he ? Has the deep earth swallow'd him?
Or hath he melted like some airy phantom
That shuns the approach of morn and the young sun-?
Or hath he wrapt him in Cimmerian darkness,
And pass'd beyond the circuit of the sight
With things of the night's shadows ?

ANONYMOUS.

THE disappearance of the youth, whose disguise and whose fate have, we hope, inclined our readers to take some interest in him, will require some explanation ere we proceed with the other personages of the story, and we shall set about giving it accordingly.

When Augustine was consigned to his cell for the second time on the preceding evening, both the monk and the young Knight of Valence had seen the key turned upon him, and had heard him secure the door in the inside with the bolt which had been put on at his request by Sister Ursula, in whose affections the youth of Augustine, his extreme handsomeness, and, above all, his indisposition of body and his melancholy of mind, had gained him considerable interest.

So soon, accordingly, as Augustine re-entered his apartment, he was greeted in a whisper by the sister, who, during the interval of his absence, had contrived to slip into the cell, and, having tappiced herself behind the little bed, came out, with great appearance of joy, to greet the return of the youth.

The number of little attentions, the disposal of holly boughs, and such other evergreens as the season permitted, showed the anxiety of the holy sisters to decorate the chamber of their guest, and the greetings of Sister Ursula expressed the same friendly interest, at the same time intimating that she was already in some degree in possession of the stranger's mystery.

As Augustine and the holy sister were busied in exchange of confidence, the extraordinary difference between their countenances and their persons must have struck any one who might have been accidentally a witness of their interview. The dark pilgrim's robe of the disguised female was not a stronger contrast to the white woollen garment worn by the votaress of St. Bride than the visage of the nun, seamed with many a ghastly scar, and the light of one of her eyes extinguished for ever, causing it to roll a sightless luminary in her head, was to the beautiful countenance of Augustine, now bent with a confidential and even affectionate look upon the extraordinary features of her companion.

"You know," said the supposed Augustine, "the principal part of my story. Can you, or will you, lend me your assistance? If not, my dearest sister, you must consent to witness my death, rather than my shame. Yes, Sister Ursula, I will not be pointed at by the finger of scorn, as the thoughtless maiden who sacrificed so much for a young man, of whose attachment she was not so well assured as she ought to have been. I will not be dragged before De Walton, for the purpose of being compelled, by threats of torture, to declare myself the female in honour of whom he holds the Dangerous

Castle. No doubt, he might be glad to give his hand in wedlock to a damsel whose dowry is so ample; but who can tell whether he will regard me with that respect which every woman would wish to command, or pardon that boldness of which I have been guilty, even though its consequences have been in his own favour?"

"Nay, my darling daughter," answered the nun, "comfort yourself; for, in all I can aid you, be assured I will. My means are somewhat more than my present situation may express, and, be assured, they shall be tried to the uttermost. Methinks I still hear that lay which you sang to the other sisters and myself, although I alone, touched by feelings kindred to yours, had the address to comprehend that it told your own tale."

"I am yet surprised," said Augustine, speaking beneath her breath, "how I had the boldness to sing in your ears the lay, which, in fact, was the history of my disgrace."

"Alas! that you will say so," returned the nun; "there was not a word but what resembled those tales of love and of high-spirited daring which the best minstrels love to celebrate, and the noblest knights and maidens weep at once and smile to hear. The Lady Augusta of Berkely, a great heiress, according to the world, both in land and movable goods, becomes the king's ward by the death of her parents; and thus is on the point of being given away in marriage to a minion of the King of England, whom in these Scottish valleys we scruple not to call a peremptory tyrant."

"I must not say so, my sister," said the pilgrim, "and yet, true it is, that the cousin of the obscure parasite Gaviston, on whom the king wished to

confer my poor hand, was neither by birth, merit, nor circumstance worthy of such an alliance. Meantime I heard of the fame of Sir John de Walton; and I heard of it not with the less interest that his feats of chivalry were said to adorn a knight, who, rich in everything else, was poor in worldly goods, and in the smiles of fortune. I saw this Sir John de Walton, and I acknowledge that a thought, which had already intruded itself on my imagination, became, after this interview, by frequent recurrence, more familiar, and more welcome to me. Methought that the daughter of a powerful English family, if she could give away with her hand such wealth as the world spoke of, would more justly and honourably bestow it in remedying the errors of fortune in regard to a gallant knight like De Walton, than in patching the revenues of a beggarly Frenchman, whose only merit was in being the kinsman of a man who was very generally detested by the whole kingdom of England, excepting the infatuated monarch himself."

"Nobly designed, my daughter," said the nun. "What more worthy of a noble heart, possessing riches, beauty, birth, and rank, than to confer them all upon indigent and chivalrous merit?"

"Such, dearest sister, was my intention," replied Augustine; "but I have, perhaps, scarce sufficiently explained the manner in which I meant to proceed. By the advice of a minstrel of our house, the same who is now prisoner at Douglas, I caused exhibit a large feast upon Christmas eve, and sent invitations abroad to the young knights of noble name who were known to spend their leisure in quest of arms and adventures. When the tables were drawn, and the feast concluded, Bertram, as had been before

devised, was called upon to take his harp. He sang, receiving from all who were present the attention due to a minstrel of so much fame. The theme which he chose was the frequent capture of this Douglas Castle, or, as the poet termed it, Castle Dangerous. 'Where are the champions of the renowned Edward the First,' said the minstrel, 'when the realm of England cannot furnish a man brave enough, or sufficiently expert in the wars, to defend a miserable hamlet of the North against the Scottish rebels, who have vowed to retake it over our soldiers' heads ere the year rolls to an end? Where are the noble ladies, whose smiles used to give countenance to the Knights of St. George's Cross? Alas! the spirit of love and of chivalry is alike dead amongst us — our knights are limited to petty enterprises — and our noblest heiresses are given as prizes to strangers, as if their own country had no one to deserve them.' — Here stopped the harp; and I shame to say that I myself, as if moved to enthusiasm by the song of the minstrel, arose, and, taking from my neck the chain of gold which supported a crucifix of special sanctity, I made my vow, always under the king's permission, that I would give my hand, and the inheritance of my fathers, to the good knight, being of noble birth and lineage, who should keep the Castle of Douglas, in the King of England's name, for a year and a day. I sat down, my dearest sister, deafened with the jubilee in which my guests expressed their applause of my supposed patriotism. Yet some degree of pause took place amidst the young knights, who might reasonably have been supposed ready to embrace this offer, although at the risk of being incumbered with Augusta of Berkely."

"Shame on the man," said Sister Ursula, "who should think so! Put your beauty alone, my dearest, into consideration, and a true knight ought to have embraced the dangers of twenty Castles of Douglas, rather than let such an invaluable opportunity of gaining your favour be lost."

"It may be that some in reality thought so," said the pilgrim; "but it was supposed that the king's favour might be lost by those who seemed too anxious to thwart his royal purpose upon his ward's hand. At any rate, greatly to my joy, the only person who availed himself of the offer I had made was Sir John de Walton; and as his acceptance of it was guarded by a clause, saving and reserving the king's approbation, I hope he has not suffered any diminution of Edward's favour."

"Assure yourself, noble and high-spirited young lady," replied the nun, "that there is no fear of thy generous devotion hurting thy lover with the King of England. Something we hear concerning worldly passages, even in this remote nook of St. Bride's cloister; and the report goes among the English soldiers that their king was indeed offended at your putting your will in opposition to his own; yet, on the other hand, this preferred lover, Sir John de Walton, was a man of such extensive fame, and your offer was so much in the character of better but not forgotten times, that even a king could not at the beginning of a long and stubborn war deprive an errant cavalier of his bride, if she should be duly won by his sword and lance."

"Ah! dearest Sister Ursula!" sighed the disguised pilgrim; "but, on the other hand, how much time must pass by in the siege, by defeating which that suit must needs be advanced? While I sat

in my lonely castle, tidings after tidings came to astound me with the numerous, or rather the constant, dangers with which my lover was surrounded, until at length, in a moment I think of madness, I resolved to set out in this masculine disguise; and, having myself with my own eyes seen in what situation I had placed my knight, I determined to take such measures in respect to shortening the term of his trial, or otherwise, as a sight of Douglas Castle, and — why should I deny it? — of Sir John de Walton, might suggest. Perhaps you, my dearest sister, may not so well understand my being tempted into flinching from the resolution which I had laid down for my own honour, and that of my lover; but consider, that my resolution was the consequence of a moment of excitation, and that the course which I adopted was the conclusion of a long, wasting, sickening state of uncertainty, the effect of which was to weaken the nerves which were once highly strung with love of my country, as I thought; but in reality, alas! with fond and anxious feelings of a more selfish description."

"Alas!" said Sister Ursula, evincing the strongest symptoms of interest and compassion, "am I the person, dearest child, whom you suspect of insensibility to the distresses which are the fruit of true love? Do you suppose that the air which is breathed within these walls has the property, upon the female heart, of such marvellous fountains as they say change into stone the substances which are immersed into their waters? Hear my tale, and judge if it can be thus with one who possesses my causes of grief. And do not fear for loss of time: we must let our neighbours at Hazelside be settled for the evening, ere I furnish you with the means

of escape; and you must have a trusty guide, for whose fidelity I will be responsible, to direct your path through these woods, and protect you in case of any danger, too likely to occur in these troublesome times. It will thus be nigh an hour ere you depart; and sure I am that in no manner can you spend the time better than in listening to distresses too similar to your own, and flowing from the source of disappointed affection which you must needs sympathise with."

The distresses of the Lady Augusta did not prevent her being in some degree affected almost ludicrously with the singular contrast between the hideous countenance of this victim of the tender passion, and the cause to which she imputed her sorrows; but it was not a moment for giving way to a sense of the ridiculous, which would have been in the highest degree offensive to the sister of St. Bride, whose good-will she had so many reasons to conciliate. She readily, therefore, succeeded in preparing herself to listen to the votary with an appearance of sympathy, which might reward that which she had herself experienced at the hands of Sister Ursula; while the unfortunate recluse, with an agitation which made her ugliness still more conspicuous, narrated, nearly in a whisper, the following circumstances:—

"My misfortunes commenced long before I was called Sister Ursula, or secluded as a votaress within these walls. My father was a noble Norman, who, like many of his countrymen, sought and found fortune at the court of the King of Scotland. He was endowed with the sheriffdom of this county, and Maurice de Hattely, or Hautlieu, was numbered among the wealthy and powerful barons of Scotland.

Wherefore should I deny it, that the daughter of this baron, then called Margaret de Hautlieu, was also distinguished among the great and fair of the land? It can be no censurable vanity which provokes me to speak the truth, and, unless I tell it myself, you could hardly suspect what a resemblance I once bore even to the lovely Lady Augusta of Berkely. About this time broke out those unfortunate feuds of Bruce and Baliol, which have been so long the curse of this country. My father, determined in his choice of party by the arguments of his wealthy kinsmen at the court of Edward, embraced with passion the faction of the English interest, and became one of the keenest partisans, at first of John Baliol, and afterwards of the English monarch. None among the Anglocised-Scottish, as his party was called, were so zealous as he for the red cross, and no one was more detested by his countrymen who followed the national standard of St. Andrew and the patriot Wallace. Among those soldiers of the soil, Malcolm Fleming of Biggar was one of the most distinguished by his noble birth, his high acquirements, and his fame in chivalry. I saw him; and the ghastly spectre who now addresses you must not be ashamed to say, that she loved, and was beloved by, one of the handsomest youths in Scotland. Our attachment was discovered to my father almost ere we had owned it to each other, and he was furious both against my lover and myself; he placed me under the charge of a religious woman of this rule, and I was immured within the house of St. Bride, where my father shamed not to announce he would cause me to take the veil by force, unless I agreed to wed a youth bred at the English court, his nephew, and, as Heaven had

granted him no son, the heir, as he had resolved, of the House of Hautlieu. I was not long in making my election. I protested that death should be my choice, rather than any other husband excepting Malcolm Fleming. Neither was my lover less faithful: he found means to communicate to me a particular night on which he proposed to attempt to storm the nunnery of St. Bride, and carry me from hence to freedom and the greenwood, of which Wallace was generally called the king. In an evil hour — an hour, I think, of infatuation and witchery — I suffered the abbess to wheedle the secret out of me, which I might have been sensible would appear more horribly flagitious to her than to any other woman that breathed; but I had not taken the vows, and I thought Wallace and Fleming had the same charms for everybody as for me, and the artful woman gave me reason to believe that her loyalty to Bruce was without a flaw of suspicion, and she took part in a plot of which my freedom was the object. The abbess engaged to have the English guards removed to a distance, and in appearance the troops were withdrawn. Accordingly, in the middle of the night appointed, the window of my cell, which was two stories from the ground, was opened without noise; and never were my eyes more gladdened than, as ready disguised and arrayed for flight, even in a horseman's dress, like yourself, fairest Lady Augusta, I saw Malcolm Fleming spring into the apartment. He rushed towards me; but at the same time my father with ten of his strongest men filled the room, and cried their war-cry of Baliol. Blows were instantly dealt on every side. A form like a giant, however, appeared in the midst of the tumult, and distinguished himself, even to my half-

giddy eye, by the ease with which he bore down and dispersed those who fought against our freedom. My father alone offered an opposition which threatened to prove fatal to him; for Wallace, it was said, could foil any two martial champions that ever drew sword. Brushing from him the armed men, as a lady would drive away with her fan a swarm of troublesome flies, he secured me in one arm, used his other for our mutual protection, and I found myself in the act of being borne in safety down the ladder by which my deliverers had ascended from without; — but an evil fate awaited this attempt.

"My father, whom the Champion of Scotland had spared for my sake, or rather for Fleming's, gained by his victor's compassion and lenity a fearful advantage, and made a remorseless use of it. Having only his left hand to oppose to the maniac attempts of my father, even the strength of Wallace could not prevent the assailant, with all the energy of desperation, from throwing down the ladder, on which his daughter was perched like a dove in the grasp of an eagle. The Champion saw our danger, and, exerting his inimitable strength and agility, cleared himself and me from the ladder, and leaped free of the moat of the convent, into which we must otherwise have been precipitated. The Champion of Scotland was saved in the desperate attempt, but I, who fell among a heap of stones and rubbish, I, the disobedient daughter, well-nigh the apostate vestal, waked only from a long bed of sickness, to find myself the disfigured wretch which you now see me. I then learned that Malcolm had escaped from the fray, and shortly after I heard, with feelings less keen perhaps than they ought to have been, that my father was slain in one of the endless

battles which took place between the contending factions. If he had lived, I might have submitted to the completion of my fate; but since he was no more, I felt that it would be a preferable lot to be a beggar in the streets of a Scottish village than an abbess in this miserable house of St. Bride; nor was even that poor object of ambition, on which my father used to expatiate when desirous of persuading me to enter the monastic state, by milder means than throwing me off the battlements, long open to me. The old abbess died of a cold caught the evening of the fray; and the place, which might have been kept open until I was capable of filling it, was disposed of otherwise, when the English thought fit to reform, as they termed it, the discipline of the house; and, instead of electing a new abbess, sent hither two or three friendly monks, who have now the absolute government of the community, and wield it entirely according to the pleasure of the English. But I, for one, who have had the honour to be supported by the arms of the Champion of my country, will not remain here to be commanded by this Abbot Jerome. I will go forth, nor do I fear to find relations and friends who will provide a more fitting place of refuge for Margaret de Hautlieu than the convent of St. Bride; you too, dearest lady, shall obtain your freedom, and it will be well to leave such information as will make Sir John de Walton aware of the devotion with which his happy fate has inspired you."

"It is not, then, your own intention," said the Lady Augusta, "to return into the world again, and you are about to renounce the lover, in a union with whom you and he once saw your joint happiness?"

"It is a question, my dearest child," said Sister Ursula, "which I dare not ask myself, and to which I am absolutely uncertain what answer I should return. I have not taken the final and irrevocable vows; I have done nothing to alter my situation with regard to Malcolm Fleming. He also, by the vows plighted in the Chancery of Heaven, is my affianced bridegroom, nor am I conscious that I less deserve his faith, in any respect now, than at the moment when it was pledged to me; but I confess, dearest lady, that rumours have reached me which sting me to the quick; the reports of my wounds and scars are said to have estranged the knight of my choice. I am now indeed poor," she added, with a sigh, "and I am no longer possessed of those personal charms which they say attract the love, and fix the fidelity, of the other sex. I teach myself, therefore, to think, in my moments of settled resolution, that all betwixt me and Malcolm Fleming is at an end, saving good wishes on the part of both towards the other; and yet there is a sensation in my bosom which whispers, in spite of my reason, that if I absolutely believed that which I now say, there would be no object on earth worthy my living for in order to attain it. This insinuating prepossession whispers to my secret soul, and in very opposition to my reason and understanding, that Malcolm Fleming, who could pledge his all upon the service of his country, is incapable of nourishing the versatile affection of an ordinary, a coarse, or a venal character. Methinks, were the difference upon his part instead of mine, he would not lose his interest in my eyes, because he was seamed with honourable scars, obtained in asserting the freedom of his choice, but that such wounds

would, in my opinion, add to his merit, whatever they took away from his personal comeliness. Ideas rise on my soul, as if Malcolm and Margaret might yet be to each other all that their affections once anticipated with so much security, and that a change, which took nothing from the honour and virtue of the beloved person, must rather add to, than diminish, the charms of the union. Look at me, dearest Lady Augusta! — look me — if you have courage — full in the face, and tell me whether I do not rave when my fancy is thus converting mere possibilities into that which is natural and probable."

The Lady of Berkely, conscious of the necessity, raised her eyes on the unfortunate nun, afraid of losing her own chance of deliverance by the mode in which she should conduct herself in this crisis; yet not willing at the same time to flatter the unfortunate Ursula, with suggesting ideas for which her own sense told her she could hardly find any rational grounds. But her imagination, stored with the minstrelsy of the time, brought back to her recollection the Loathly Lady in "The Marriage of Sir Gawain," and she conducted her reply in the following manner: —

"You ask me, my dear Lady Margaret, a trying question, which it would be unfriendly to answer otherwise than sincerely, and most cruel to answer with too much rashness. It is true that what is called beauty is the first quality on which we of the weaker sex learn to set a value; we are flattered by the imputation of personal charms, whether we actually possess them or not; and no doubt we learn to place upon them a great deal more consequence than in reality is found to belong to them. Women, however, even such as are held by their

own sex, and perhaps in secret by themselves, as devoid of all pretensions to beauty, have been known to become, from their understanding, their talents, or their accomplishments, the undoubted objects of the warmest attachment. Wherefore then should you, in the mere rashness of your apprehension, deem it impossible that your Malcolm Fleming should be made of that porcelain clay of the earth which despises the passing captivations of outward form, in comparison to the charms of true affection, and the excellence of talents and virtue?"

The nun pressed her companion's hand to her bosom, and answered her with a deep sigh.

"I fear," she said, "you flatter me; and yet, in a crisis like this, it does one good to be flattered, even as cordials, otherwise dangerous to the constitution, are wisely given to support a patient through a paroxysm of agony, and enable him to endure at least what they cannot cure. Answer only one question, and it will be time we drop this conversation. Could you, sweet lady — you upon whom fortune has bestowed so many charms — could any argument make you patient under the irretrievable loss of your personal advantages, with the concomitant loss, as in my case is most probable, of that lover for whom you have already done so much?"

The English lady cast her eyes again on her friend, and could not help shuddering a little at the thought of her own beautiful countenance being exchanged for the seamed and scarred features of the Lady of Hautlieu, irregularly lighted by the beams of a single eye.

"Believe me," she said, looking solemnly up-

wards, "that even in the case which you suppose, I would not sorrow so much for myself, as I would for the poor-spirited thoughts of the lover who could leave me because those transitory charms (which must in any case ere long take their departure) had fled ere yet the bridal day. It is, however, concealed by the decrees of Providence, in what manner, or to what extent, other persons, with whose disposition we are not fully acquainted, may be affected by such changes. I can only assure you that my hopes go with yours, and that there is no difficulty which shall remain in your path in future, if it is in my power to remove it.— Hark!" ——

"It is the signal of our freedom," replied Ursula, giving attention to something resembling the whoop of the night owl. "We must prepare to leave the convent in a few minutes. Have you anything to take with you?"

"Nothing," answered the Lady of Berkely, "except the few valuables, which I scarce know why I brought with me on my flight hither. This scroll, which I shall leave behind, gives my faithful minstrel permission to save himself, by confessing to Sir John de Walton who the person really is whom he has had within his reach."

"It is strange," said the novice of St. Bride, "through what extraordinary labyrinths this Love, this Will-of-the-Wisp, guides his votaries. Take heed as you descend; this trapdoor, carefully concealed, curiously jointed and oiled, leads to a secret postern, where I conceive the horses already wait which will enable us speedily to bid adieu to St. Bride's — Heaven's blessing on her, and on her

convent! We can have no advantage from any light, until we are in the open air."

During this time, Sister Ursula, to give her for the last time her conventual name, exchanged her stole, or loose upper garment, for the more succinct cloak and hood of a horseman. She led the way through divers passages, studiously complicated, until the Lady of Berkely, with throbbing heart, stood in the pale and doubtful moonlight, which was shining with grey uncertainty upon the walls of the ancient building. The imitation of an owlet's cry directed them to a neighbouring large elm, and on approaching it they were aware of three horses, held by one concerning whom they could only see that he was tall, strong, and accoutred in the dress of a man-at-arms.

"The sooner," he said, "we are gone from this place, Lady Margaret, it is so much the better. You have only to direct the course which we shall hold."

Lady Margaret's answer was given beneath her breath, and replied to with a caution from the guide to ride slowly and silently for the first quarter of an hour, by which time inhabited places would be left at a distance.

CHAPTER XII.

GREAT was the astonishment of the young Knight of Valence and the reverend Father Jerome, when, upon breaking into the cell, they discovered the youthful pilgrim's absence, and, from the garments which were left, saw every reason to think that the one-eyed novice, Sister Ursula, had accompanied him in his escape from custody. A thousand thoughts thronged upon Sir Aymer, how shamefully he had suffered himself to be outwitted by the artifices of a boy and of a novice. His reverend companion in error felt no less contrition for having recommended to the knight a mild exercise of his authority. Father Jerome had obtained his preferment as abbot upon the faith of his zeal for the cause of the English monarch, with the affected interest in which he was at a loss to reconcile his proceedings of the last night. A hurried inquiry took place, from which little could be learned, save that the young pilgrim had most certainly gone off with the Lady Margaret de Hautlieu, an incident at which the females of the convent expressed surprise, mingled with a great deal of horror; while that of the males, whom the news soon reached, was qualified with a degree of wonder, which seemed to be founded upon the very different personal appearance of the two fugitives.

"Sacred Virgin," said a nun, "who could have conceived the hopeful votaress, Sister Ursula, so lately drowned in tears for her father's untimely

fate, capable of eloping with a boy scarce fourteen years old!"

"And, holy St. Bride!" said the Abbot Jerome, "what could have made so handsome a young man lend his arm to assist such a nightmare as Sister Ursula in the commission of so great an enormity? Certainly he can neither plead temptation nor seduction, but must have gone, as the worldly phrase is — to the devil with a dishclout."

"I must disperse the soldiers to pursue the fugitives," said De Valence, "unless this letter, which the pilgrim must have left behind him, shall contain some explanations respecting our mysterious prisoner."

After viewing the contents with some surprise, he read aloud —

"The undersigned, late residing in the house of St. Bride, do you, Father Jerome, the abbot of said house, to know, that finding you were disposed to treat me as a prisoner and a spy, in the sanctuary to which you had received me as a distressed person, I have resolved to use my natural liberty, with which you have no right to interfere, and therefore have withdrawn myself from your abbacy. Moreover, finding that the novice called in your convent Sister Ursula (who hath, by monastic rule and discipline, a fair title to return to the world unless she is pleased, after a year's novitiate, to profess herself sister of your order) is determined to use such privilege, I joyfully take the opportunity of her company in this her lawful resolution, as being what is in conformity to the law of God, and the precepts of St. Bride, which gave you no authority to detain any person in your convent by force who hath not taken upon her irrevocably the vows of the order.

"To you, Sir John de Walton, and Sir Aymer de

Valence, knights of England, commanding the garrison of Douglas Dale, I have only to say, that you have acted and are acting against me under a mystery, the solution of which is comprehended in a secret known only to my faithful minstrel, Bertram of the many Lays, as whose son I have found it convenient to pass myself. But as I cannot at this time prevail upon myself personally to discover a secret which cannot well be unfolded without feelings of shame, I not only give permission to the said Bertram the minstrel, but I charge and command him, that he tell to you the purpose with which I came originally to the Castle of Douglas. When this is discovered, it will only remain to express my feelings towards the two knights, in return for the pain and agony of mind which their violence and threats of further severities have occasioned me.

"And first, respecting Sir Aymer de Valence, I freely and willingly forgive him for having been involved in a mistake to which I myself led the way, and I shall at all times be happy to meet with him as an acquaintance, and never to think further of his part in these few days' history, saving as matter of mirth and ridicule.

"But respecting Sir John de Walton, I must request of him to consider whether his conduct towards me, standing as we at present do towards each other, is such as he himself ought to forget, or I ought to forgive; and I trust he will understand me when I tell him, that all former connections must henceforth be at an end between him and the supposed

"AUGUSTINE."

"This is madness," said the abbot, when he had read the letter, — "very midsummer madness; not unfrequently an accompaniment of this pestilential disease, and I should do well in requiring

of those soldiers who shall first apprehend this youth Augustine, that they reduce his victuals immediately to water and bread, taking care that the diet do not exceed in measure what is necessary to sustain nature; nay, I should be warranted by the learned, did I recommend a sufficient intermixture of flagellation with belts, stirrup-leathers, or surcingles, and, failing those, with riding-whips, switches, and the like."

"Hush! my reverend father," said De Valence, "a light begins to break in upon me. John de Walton, if my suspicion be true, would sooner expose his own flesh to be hewn from his bones, than have this Augustine's finger stung by a gnat. Instead of treating this youth as a madman, I, for my own part, will be contented to avow that I myself have been bewitched and fascinated; and by my honour, if I send out my attendants in quest of the fugitives, it shall be with the strict charge, that, when apprehended, they treat them with all respect, and protect them, if they object to return to this house, to any honourable place of refuge which they may desire."

"I hope," said the abbot, looking strangely confused, "I shall be first heard in behalf of the Church concerning this affair of an abducted nun? You see yourself, Sir Knight, that this scapegrace of a minstrel avouches neither repentance nor contrition at his share in a matter so flagitious."

"You shall be secured an opportunity of being fully heard," replied the knight, "if you shall find at last that you really desire one. Meantime, I must back, without a moment's delay, to inform Sir John de Walton of the turn which affairs have taken. Farewell, reverend father. By my honour,

we may wish each other joy that we have escaped from a troublesome charge, which brought as much terror with it as the phantoms of a fearful dream, and is yet found capable of being dispelled by a cure as simple as that of awakening the sleeper. But, by St. Bride! both churchmen and laymen are bound to sympathise with the unfortunate Sir John de Walton. I tell thee, father, that if this letter" — touching the missive with his finger — "is to be construed literally, as far as respects him, he is the man most to be pitied betwixt the brink of Solway and the place where we now stand. Suspend thy curiosity, most worthy churchman, lest there should be more in this matter than I myself see; so that, while thinking that I have lighted on the true explanation, I may not have to acknowledge that I have been again leading you into error. — Sound to horse there! Ho!" he called out from the window of the apartment; "and let the party I brought hither prepare to scour the woods on their return."

"By my faith!" said Father Jerome, "I am right glad that this young nut-cracker is going to leave me to my own meditation. I hate when a young person pretends to understand whatever passes, while his betters are obliged to confess that it is all a mystery to them. Such an assumption is like that of the conceited fool, Sister Ursula, who pretended to read with a single eye a manuscript which I myself could not find intelligible with the assistance of my spectacles."

This might not have quite pleased the young knight, nor was it one of those truths which the abbot would have chosen to deliver in his hearing. But the knight had shaken him by the hand, said

adieu, and was already at Hazelside, issuing particular orders to little troops of the archers and others, and occasionally chiding Thomas Dickson, who, with a degree of curiosity which the English knight was not very willing to excuse, had been endeavouring to get some account of the occurrences of the night.

"Peace, fellow!" he said, "and mind thine own business, being well assured that the hour will come in which it will require all the attention thou canst give, leaving others to take care of their own affairs."

"If I am suspected of anything," answered Dickson, in a tone rather dogged and surly than otherwise, "methinks it were but fair to let me know what accusation is brought against me. I need not tell you that chivalry prescribes that a knight should not attack an enemy undefied."

"When you are a knight," answered Sir Aymer de Valence, "it will be time enough for me to reckon with you upon the points of form due to you by the laws of chivalry. Meanwhile, you had best let me know what share you have had in playing off the martial phantom which sounded the rebellious slogan of Douglas in the town of that name?"

"I know nothing of what you speak," answered the goodman of Hazelside.

"See, then," said the knight, "that you do not engage yourself in the affairs of other people, even if your conscience warrants that you are in no danger from your own."

So saying, he rode off, not waiting any answer. The ideas which filled his head were to the following purpose.

"I know not how it is, but one mist seems no sooner to clear away than we find ourselves engaged in another. I take it for granted that the disguised damsel is no other than the goddess of Walton's private idolatry, who has cost him and me so much trouble, and some certain degree of misunderstanding during these last weeks. By my honour! this fair lady is right lavish in the pardon which she has so frankly bestowed upon me, and if she is willing to be less complaisant to Sir John de Walton, why then — And what then? — It surely does not infer that she would receive me into that place in her affections from which she has just expelled De Walton? Nor, if she did, could I avail myself of a change in favour of myself, at the expense of my friend and companion in arms. It were a folly even to dream of a thing so improbable. But with respect to the other business, it is worth serious consideration. Yon sexton seems to have kept company with dead bodies, until he is unfit for the society of the living; and as to that Dickson of Hazelside, as they call him, there is no attempt against the English during these endless wars in which that man has not been concerned. Had my life depended upon it, I could not have prevented myself from intimating my suspicions of him, let him take it as he lists."

So saying, the knight spurred his horse, and, arriving at Douglas Castle without further adventure, demanded, in a tone of greater cordiality than he had of late used, whether he could be admitted to Sir John de Walton, having something of consequence to report to him. He was immediately ushered into an apartment, in which

the governor was seated at his solitary breakfast. Considering the terms upon which they had lately stood, the governor of Douglas Dale was somewhat surprised at the easy familiarity with which De Valence now approached him.

"Some uncommon news," said Sir John, rather gravely, "have brought me the honour of Sir Aymer de Valence's company."

"It is," answered Sir Aymer, "what seems of high importance to your interest, Sir John de Walton, and therefore I were to blame if I lost a moment in communicating it."

"I shall be proud to profit by your intelligence," said Sir John de Walton.

"And I too," said the young knight, "am loth to lose the credit of having penetrated a mystery which blinded Sir John de Walton. At the same time, I do not wish to be thought capable of jesting with you, which might be the case were I, from misapprehension, to give a false key to this matter. With your permission, then, we will proceed thus: We go together to the place of Bertram the minstrel's confinement. I have in my possession a scroll from the young person who was intrusted to the care of the Abbot Jerome; it is written in a delicate female hand, and gives authority to the minstrel to declare the purpose which brought them to this vale of Douglas."

"It must be as you say," said Sir John de Walton, "although I can scarce see occasion for adding so much form to a mystery which can be expressed in such small compass."

Accordingly the two knights, a warder leading the way, proceeded to the dungeon to which the minstrel had been removed.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE doors of the stronghold, being undone, displayed a dungeon such as in those days held victims hopeless of escape, but in which the ingenious knave of modern times would scarcely have deigned to remain many hours. The huge rings by which the fetters were soldered together, and attached to the human body, were, when examined minutely, found to be clenched together by riveting so very thin, that when rubbed with corrosive acid, or patiently ground with a bit of sandstone, the hold of the fetters upon each other might be easily forced asunder, and the purpose of them entirely frustrated. The locks also, large, and apparently very strong, were so coarsely made, that an artist of small ingenuity could easily contrive to get the better of their fastenings upon the same principle. The daylight found its way to the subterranean dungeon only at noon, and through a passage which was purposely made tortuous, so as to exclude the rays of the sun, while it presented no obstacle to wind or rain. The doctrine that a prisoner was to be esteemed innocent until he should be found guilty by his peers was not understood in those days of brute force, and he was only accommodated with a lamp or other alleviation of his misery, if his demeanour was quiet, and he appeared disposed to give his jailer no trouble by attempting to make his escape.

Such a cell of confinement was that of Bertram, whose moderation of temper and patience had nevertheless procured for him such mitigations of his fate as the warder could grant. He was permitted to carry into his cell the old book, in the perusal of which he found an amusement of his solitude, together with writing-materials, and such other helps towards spending his time as were consistent with his abode in the bosom of the rock, and the degree of information with which his minstrel craft had possessed him. He raised his head from the table as the knights entered, while the governor observed to the young knight: —

"As you seem to think yourself possessed of the secret of this prisoner, I leave it to you, Sir Aymer de Valence, to bring it to light in the manner which you shall judge most expedient. If the man or his son have suffered unnecessary hardship, it shall be my duty to make amends — which, I suppose, can be no very important matter."

Bertram looked up, and fixed his eyes full upon the governor, but read nothing in his looks which indicated his being better acquainted than before with the secret of his imprisonment. Yet, upon turning his eye towards Sir Aymer, his countenance evidently lighted up, and the glance which passed between them was one of intelligence.

"You have my secret then," said he, "and you know who it is that passes under the name of Augustine?"

Sir Aymer exchanged with him a look of acquiescence; while the eyes of the governor, glancing wildly from the prisoner to the Knight of Valence, exclaimed, —

"Sir Aymer de Valence, as you are belted knight and Christian man, as you have honour to preserve on earth and a soul to rescue after death, I charge you to tell me the meaning of this mystery! It may be that you conceive, with truth, that you have subject of complaint against me. If so, I will satisfy you as a knight may."

The minstrel spoke at the same moment.

"I charge this knight," he said, "by his vow of chivalry, that he do not divulge any secret belonging to a person of honour and of character, unless he has positive assurance that it is done entirely by that person's own consent."

"Let this note remove your scruples," said Sir Aymer, putting the scroll into the hands of the minstrel; "and for you, Sir John de Walton, far from retaining the least feeling of any misunderstanding which may have existed between us, I am disposed entirely to bury it in forgetfulness, as having arisen out of a series of mistakes which no mortal could have comprehended. And do not be offended, my dear Sir John, when I protest, on my knightly faith, that I pity the pain which I think this scroll is likely to give you, and that, if my utmost efforts can be of the least service to you in unravelling this tangled skein, I will contribute them with as much earnestness as ever I did aught in my life. This faithful minstrel will now see that he can have no difficulty in yielding up a secret which I doubt not, but for the writing I have just put into his hands, he would have continued to keep with unshaken fidelity."

Sir Aymer now placed in De Walton's hand a note, in which he had, ere he left St. Bride's convent, signified his own interpretation of the

mystery; and the governor had scarcely read the name it contained, before the same name was pronounced aloud by Bertram, who at the same moment handed to the governor the scroll which he had received from the Knight of Valence.

The white plume which floated over the knight's cap of maintenance, which was worn as a headpiece within doors, was not more pale in complexion than was the knight himself at the unexpected and surprising information, that the lady who was, in chivalrous phrase, empress of his thoughts, and commander of his actions, and to whom, even in less fantastic times, he must have owed the deepest gratitude for the generous election which she had made in his favour, was the same person whom he had threatened with personal violence, and subjected to hardships and affronts which he would not willingly have bestowed even upon the meanest of her sex.

Yet Sir John de Walton seemed at first scarcely to comprehend the numerous ill consequences which might probably follow this unhappy complication of mistakes. He took the paper from the minstrel's hand, and while his eye, assisted by the lamp, wandered over the characters without apparently their conveying any distinct impression to his understanding, De Valence even became alarmed that he was about to lose his faculties.

"For Heaven's sake, sir," he said, "be a man, and support with manly steadiness these unexpected occurrences — I would fain think they will reach to nothing else — which the wit of man could not have prevented. This fair lady, I would fain hope, cannot be much hurt or deeply offended

by a train of circumstances, the natural consequence of your anxiety to discharge perfectly a duty upon which must depend the accomplishment of all the hopes she had permitted you to entertain. In God's name, rouse up, sir! Let it not be said that an apprehended frown of a fair lady hath damped to such a degree the courage of the boldest knight in England; be what men have called you, 'Walton the Unwavering;' in Heaven's name, let us at least see that the lady is indeed offended, before we conclude that she is irreconcilably so. To whose fault are we to ascribe the source of all these errors? Surely, with all due respect, to the caprice of the lady herself, which has engendered such a nest of mistakes. Think of it as a man, and as a soldier. Suppose that you yourself, or I, desirous of proving the fidelity of our sentinels, or for any other reason, good or bad, attempted to enter this Dangerous Castle of Douglas without giving the password to the warders, would we be entitled to blame those upon duty if, not knowing our persons, they manfully refused us entrance, made us prisoners, and mishandled us while resisting our attempt, in terms of the orders which we ourselves had imposed upon them? What is there that makes a difference between such a sentinel and yourself, John de Walton, in this curious affair, which, by Heaven! would rather form a gay subject for the minstrelsy of this excellent bard than the theme of a tragic lay? Come! look not thus, Sir John de Walton. Be angry, if you will, with the lady who has committed such a piece of folly, or with me who have rode up and down nearly all night on a fool's errand, and spoiled my best horse, in absolute un-

certainty how I shall get another till my uncle of Pembroke and I shall be reconciled; or, lastly, if you desire to be totally absurd in your wrath, direct it against this worthy minstrel on account of his rare fidelity, and punish him for that for which he better deserves a chain of gold. Let passion out, if you will; but chase this desponding gloom from the brow of a man and a belted knight."

Sir John de Walton made an effort to speak, and succeeded with some difficulty.

"Aymer de Valence," he said, "in irritating a madman you do but sport with your own life," and then remained silent.

"I am glad you can say so much," replied his friend; "for I was not jesting when I said I would rather that you were at variance with me, than that you laid the whole blame on yourself. It would be courteous, I think, to set this minstrel instantly at liberty. Meantime, for his lady's sake, I will entreat him, in all honour, to be our guest till the Lady Augusta de Berkely shall do us the same honour, and to assist us in our search after her place of retirement. — Good minstrel," he continued, "you hear what I say, and you will not, I suppose, be surprised that, in all honour and kind usage, you find yourself detained for a short space in this Castle of Douglas?"

"You seem, Sir Knight," replied the minstrel, "not so much to keep your eye upon the right of doing what you should as to possess the might of doing what you would. I must necessarily be guided by your advice, since you have the power to make it a command."

"And I trust," continued De Valence, "that

when your mistress and you again meet, we shall have the benefit of your intercession for anything which we may have done to displeasure her, considering that the purpose of our action was exactly the reverse."

"Let me," said Sir John de Walton, "say a single word. I will offer thee a chain of gold, heavy enough to bear down the weight of these shackles, as a sign of regret for having condemned thee to suffer so many indignities."

"Enough said, Sir John," said De Valence; "let us promise no more till this good minstrel shall see some sign of performance. Follow me this way, and I will tell thee in private of other tidings which it is important that you should know."

So saying, he withdrew De Walton from the dungeon, and sending for the old knight, Sir Philip de Montenay, already mentioned, who acted as seneschal of the castle, he commanded that the minstrel should be enlarged from the dungeon, well looked to in other respects, yet prohibited, though with every mark of civility, from leaving the castle without a trusty attendant.

"And now, Sir John de Walton," he said, "methinks you are a little churlish in not ordering me some breakfast, after I have been all night engaged in your affairs; and a cup of muscadel would, I think, be no bad induction to a full consideration of this perplexed matter."

"Thou knowest," answered De Walton, "that thou mayst call for what thou wilt, provided always thou tellest me, without loss of time, what else thou knowest respecting the will of the lady, against whom we have all sinned so grievously — and I, alas, beyond hope of forgiveness!"

"Trust me, I hope," said the Knight of Valence "the good lady bears me no malice, as indeed she has expressly renounced any ill-will against me. The words, you see, are as plain as you yourself may read — 'The lady pardons poor Aymer de Valence, and willingly, for having been involved in a mistake, to which she herself led the way; she herself will at all times be happy to meet with him as an acquaintance, and never to think further of these few days' history, except as matter of mirth and ridicule.' So it is expressly written and set down."

"Yes," replied Sir John de Walton, "but see you not that her offending lover is expressly excluded from the amnesty granted to the lesser offender? Mark you not the concluding paragraph?" He took the scroll with a trembling hand, and read with a discomposed voice its closing words. "It is even so: 'All former connection must henceforth be at an end between him and the supposed Augustine.' Explain to me how the reading of these words is reconcilable to anything but their plain sense of condemnation and forfeiture of contract, implying destruction of the hopes of Sir John de Walton?"

"You are somewhat an older man than I, Sir Knight," answered De Valence, "and, I will grant, by far the wiser and more experienced; yet I will uphold that there is no adopting the interpretation which you seem to have affixed in your mind to this letter, without supposing the preliminary, that the fair writer was distracted in her understanding — nay, never start, look wildly, or lay your hand on your sword, I do not affirm this is the case. I say again, that no woman in

her senses would have pardoned a common acquaintance for his behaving to her with unintentional disrespect and unkindness, during the currency of a certain masquerade, and, at the same time, sternly and irrevocably broke off with the lover to whom her troth was plighted, although his error in joining in the offence was neither grosser nor more protracted than that of the person indifferent to her love."

"Do not blaspheme," said Sir John de Walton; "and forgive me, if, in justice to truth and to the angel whom I fear I have forfeited for ever, I point out to you the difference which a maiden of dignity and of feeling must make between an offence towards her, committed by an ordinary acquaintance, and one of precisely the same kind, offered by a person who is bound by the most undeserved preference, by the most generous benefits, and by everything which can bind human feeling, to think and reflect ere he becomes an actor in any case in which it is possible for her to be concerned."

"Now, by mine honour," said Aymer de Valence, "I am glad to hear thee make some attempt at reason, although it is but an unreasonable kind of reason too, since its object is to destroy thine own hopes, and argue away thine own chance of happiness; but if I have, in the progress of this affair, borne me sometimes towards thee, as to give not only the governor, but even the friend, some cause of displeasure, I will make it up to thee now, John de Walton, by trying to convince thee in spite of thine own perverse logic. But here comes the muscadel and the breakfast. Wilt thou take some refreshment? — or shall we go on without the spirit of muscadel?"

"For Heaven's sake," replied De Walton, "do as thou wilt, so thou make me clear of thy well-intended babble."

"Nay, thou shalt not brawl me out of my powers of argument," said De Valence, laughing, and helping himself to a brimming cup of wine; "if thou acknowledgest thyself conquered, I am contented to give the victory to the inspiring strength of the jovial liquor."

"Do as thou listest," said De Walton, "but make an end of an argument which thou canst not comprehend."

"I deny the charge," answered the younger knight, wiping his lips, after having finished his draught; "and listen, Walton the Warlike, to a chapter in the history of women, in which thou art more unskilled than I would wish thee to be. Thou canst not deny that, be it right or wrong, thy Lady Augusta hath ventured more forward with you than is usual upon the sea of affection; she boldly made thee her choice, while thou wert as yet known to her only as a flower of English chivalry — faith, and I respect her for her frankness — but it was a choice which the more cold of her own sex might perhaps claim occasion to term rash and precipitate. — Nay, be not, I pray thee, offended — I am far from thinking or saying so: on the contrary, I will uphold with my lance her selection of John de Walton against the minions of a court, to be a wise and generous choice, and her own behaviour as alike candid and noble. But she herself is not unlikely to dread unjust misconstruction — a fear of which may not improbably induce her, upon any occasion, to seize some opportunity of showing an unwonted and unusual

rigour towards her lover, in order to balance her having extended towards him, in the beginning of their intercourse, somewhat of an unusual degree of frank encouragement. Nay, it might be easy for her lover so far to take part against himself, by arguing as thou dost when out of thy senses, as to make it difficult for her to withdraw from an argument which he himself was foolish enough to strengthen; and thus, like a maiden too soon taken at her first nay-say, she shall perhaps be allowed no opportunity of bearing herself according to her real feelings, or retracting a sentence issued with consent of the party whose hopes it destroys."

"I have heard thee, De Valence," answered the governor of Douglas Dale; "nor is it difficult for me to admit, that these thy lessons may serve as a chart to many a female heart, but not to that of Augusta de Berkely. By my life, I say I would much sooner be deprived of the merit of those few deeds of chivalry which thou sayest have procured for me such enviable distinction, than I would act upon them with the insolence, as if I said that my place in the lady's bosom was too firmly fixed to be shaken even by the success of a worthier man, or by my own gross failure, in respect to the object of my attachment. No, herself alone shall have power to persuade me that even goodness equal to that of an interceding saint will restore me to the place in her affections which I have most unworthily forfeited by a stupidity only to be compared to that of brutes."

"If you are so minded," said Aymer de Valence, "I have only one word more — forgive me if I speak it peremptorily — the lady, as you say, and say truly, must be the final arbitress in this ques-

tion. My arguments do not extend to insisting that you should claim her hand, whether she herself will or no; but to learn her determination, it is necessary that you should find out where she is, of which I am unfortunately not able to inform you."

"How! what mean you?" exclaimed the governor, who now only began to comprehend the extent of his misfortune. "Whither hath she fled? or with whom?"

"She is fled, for what I know," said De Valence, "in search of a more enterprising lover than one who is so willing to interpret every air of frost as a killing blight to his hopes; perhaps she seeks the Black Douglas, or some such hero of the Thistle, to reward, with her lands, her lordships, and beauty, those virtues of enterprise and courage of which John de Walton was at one time thought possessed. But, seriously, events are passing around us of strange import. I saw enough last night, on my way to St. Bride's, to make me suspicious of every one. I sent to you as a prisoner the old sexton of the church of Douglas. I found him contumacious as to some inquiries which I thought it proper to prosecute; but of this more at another time. The escape of this lady adds greatly to the difficulties which encircle this devoted castle."

"Aymer de Valence," replied De Walton, in a solemn and animated tone, "Douglas Castle shall be defended, as we have hitherto been able, with the aid of Heaven, to spread from its battlements the broad banner of St. George. Come of me what list during my life, I will die the faithful lover of Augusta de Berkely, even although I no longer

live as her chosen knight. There are cloisters and hermitages" ——

"Ay, marry are there," replied Sir Aymer; "and girdles of hemp, moreover, and beads of oak; but all these we omit in our reckonings, till we discover where the Lady Augusta is, and what she purposes to do in this matter."

"You say well," replied De Walton. "Let us hold counsel together by what means we shall, if possible, discover the lady's too hasty retreat, by which she has done me great wrong; I mean if she supposed her commands would not have been fully obeyed, had she honoured with them the governor of Douglas Dale, or any who are under his command."

"Now," replied De Valence, "you again speak like a true son of chivalry. With your permission, I would summon this minstrel to our presence. His fidelity to his mistress has been remarkable; and, as matters stand now, we must take instant measures for tracing the place of her retreat."

CHAPTER XIV.

The way is long, my children, long and rough —
The moors are dreary and the woods are dark;
But he that creeps from cradle on to grave,
Unskilled save in the velvet course of fortune,
Hath missed the discipline of noble hearts.

Old Play.

It was yet early in the day, when, after the governor and De Valence had again summoned Bertram to their councils, the garrison of Douglas was mustered, and a number of small parties, in addition to those already despatched by De Valence from Hazelside, were sent out to scour the woods in pursuit of the fugitives, with strict injunctions to treat them, if overtaken, with the utmost respect, and to obey their commands, keeping an eye, however, on the place where they might take refuge. To facilitate this result, some who were men of discretion were intrusted with the secret who the supposed pilgrim and the fugitive nun really were. The whole ground, whether forest or moorland, within many miles of Douglas Castle, was covered and traversed by parties, whose anxiety to detect the fugitives was equal to the reward for their safe recovery, liberally offered by De Walton and De Valence. They spared not, meantime, to make such inquiries in all directions as might bring to light any machinations of the Scottish insurgents which might be on foot in those wild districts, of which, as we have said

before, De Valence, in particular, entertained strong suspicions. Their instructions were, in case of finding such, to proceed against the persons engaged, by arrest and otherwise, in the most rigorous manner, such as had been commanded by De Walton himself at the time when the Black Douglas and his accomplices had been the principal objects of his wakeful suspicions. These various detachments had greatly reduced the strength of the garrison; yet, although numerous, alert, and despatched in every direction, they had not the fortune either to fall on the trace of the Lady of Berkely, or to encounter any party whatever of the insurgent Scottish.

Meanwhile our fugitives had, as we have seen, set out from the convent of St. Bride under the guidance of a cavalier, of whom the Lady Augusta knew nothing save that he was to guide their steps in a direction where they would not be exposed to the risk of being overtaken. At length Margaret de Hautlieu herself spoke upon the subject.

"You have made no inquiry," she said, "Lady Augusta, whither you are travelling, or under whose charge, although methinks it should much concern you to know."

"Is it not enough for me to be aware," answered Lady Augusta, "that I am travelling, kind sister, under the protection of one to whom you yourself trust as to a friend; and why need I be anxious for any further assurance of my safety?"

"Simply," said Margaret de Hautlieu, "because the persons with whom, from national as well as personal circumstances, I stand connected, are perhaps not exactly the protectors to whom you, lady, can with such perfect safety intrust yourself."

"In what sense," said the Lady Augusta, "do you use these words?"

"Because," replied Margaret de Hautlieu, "the Bruce, the Douglas, Malcolm Fleming, and others of that party, although they are incapable of abusing such an advantage to any dishonourable purpose, might nevertheless, under a strong temptation, consider you as an hostage thrown into their hands by Providence, through whom they might meditate the possibility of gaining some benefit to their dispersed and dispirited party."

"They might make me," answered the Lady Augusta, "the subject of such a treaty, when I was dead, but, believe me, never while I drew vital breath. Believe me also that, with whatever pain, shame, or agony I would again deliver myself up to the power of De Walton, yes, I would rather put myself in his hands — What do I say? *his!* — I would rather surrender myself to the meanest archer of my native country, than combine with its foes to work mischief to merry England — my own England — that country which is the envy of every other country, and the pride of all who can term themselves her natives!"

"I thought that your choice might prove so," said Lady Margaret; "and since you have honoured me with your confidence, gladly would I provide for your liberty by placing you as nearly in the situation which you yourself desire, as my poor means have the power of accomplishing. In half an hour we shall be in danger of being taken by the English parties, which will be instantly dispersed in every direction in quest of us. Now take notice, lady, I know a place in which I can

take refuge with my friends and countrymen, those gallant Scots, who have never even in this dishonoured age bent the knee to Baal. For their honour, their nicety of honour, I could in other days have answered with my own; but of late, I am bound to tell you, they have been put to those trials by which the most generous affections may be soured, and driven to a species of frenzy, the more wild that it is founded originally on the noblest feelings. A person who feels himself deprived of his natural birthright, denounced, exposed to confiscation and death, because he avouches the rights of his king, the cause of his country, ceases on his part to be nice or precise in estimating the degree of retaliation which it is lawful for him to exercise in the requital of such injuries; and, believe me, bitterly should I lament having guided you into a situation which you might consider afflicting or degrading."

"In a word, then," said the English lady, "what is it you apprehend I am like to suffer at the hands of your friends, whom I must be excused for terming rebels?"

"If," said the Sister Ursula, "*your* friends, whom I should term oppressors and tyrants, take our land and our lives, seize our castles and confiscate our property, you must confess, that the rough laws of war indulge *mine* with the privilege of retaliation. There can be no fear that such men, under any circumstances, would ever exercise cruelty or insult upon a lady of your rank; but it is another thing to calculate that they will abstain from such means of extorting advantage from your captivity as are common in warfare. You would not, I think, wish to be delivered up

to the English, on consideration of Sir John de Walton surrendering the Castle of Douglas to its natural lord; yet, were you in the hands of the Bruce or Douglas, although I can answer for your being treated with all the respect which they have the means of showing, yet I own, their putting you at such a ransom might be by no means unlikely."

"I would sooner die," said the Lady Berkely, "than have my name mixed up in a treaty so disgraceful; and De Walton's reply to it would, I am certain, be to strike the head from the messenger, and throw it from the highest tower of Douglas Castle."

"Where, then, lady, would you now go," said Sister Ursula, "were the choice in your power?"

"To my own castle," answered Lady Augusta, "where, if necessary, I could be defended even against the king himself, until I could place at least my person under the protection of the Church."

"In that case," replied Margaret de Hautlieu, "my power of rendering you assistance is only precarious, yet it comprehends a choice which I will willingly submit to your decision, notwithstanding I thereby subject the secrets of my friends to some risk of being discovered and frustrated. But the confidence which you have placed in me imposes on me the necessity of committing to you a like trust. It rests with you, whether you will proceed with me to the secret rendezvous of the Douglas and his friends, which I may be blamed for making known, and there take your chance of the reception which you may encounter, since I cannot warrant you of anything save honourable

treatment, so far as your person is concerned; or, if you should think this too hazardous, make the best of your way at once for the Border; in which last case I will proceed as far as I can with you towards the English line, and then leave you to pursue your journey, and to obtain a guard and a conductor among your own countrymen. Meantime, it will be well for me if I escape being taken, since the abbot would not shrink at inflicting upon me the death due to an apostate nun."

"Such cruelty, my sister, could hardly be inflicted upon one who had never taken the religious vows, and who still, according to the laws of the Church, had a right to make a choice between the world and the veil."

"Such choice as they gave their gallant victims," said Lady Margaret, "who have fallen into English hands during these merciless wars, — such choice as they gave to Wallace, the Champion of Scotland, — such as they gave to Hay, the gentle and the free, — to Sommerville, the flower of chivalry, — and to Athol, the blood relation of King Edward himself — all of whom were as much traitors, under which name they were executed, as Margaret de Hautlieu is an apostate nun, and subject to the rule of the cloister."

She spoke with some eagerness, for she felt as if the English lady imputed to her more coldness than she was, in such doubtful circumstances, conscious of manifesting.

"And after all," she proceeded, "you, Lady Augusta de Berkely, what do you venture, if you run the risk of falling into the hands of your lover? What dreadful risk do you incur? You need not, methinks, fear being immured between

four walls, with a basket of bread and a cruise of water, which, were I seized, would be the only support allowed to me for the short space that my life would be prolonged. Nay, even were you to be betrayed to the rebel Scots, as you call them, a captivity among the hills, sweetened by the hope of deliverance, and rendered tolerable by all the alleviations which the circumstances of your captors allowed them the means of supplying, were not, I think, a lot so very hard to endure."

"Nevertheless," answered the Lady of Berkely, "frightful enough it must have appeared to me, since, to fly from such, I threw myself upon your guidance."

"And whatever you think or suspect," answered the novice, "I am as true to you as ever was one maiden to another; and as sure as ever Sister Ursula was true to her vows, although they were never completed, so will I be faithful to your secret, even at the risk of betraying my own."

"Hearken, lady!" she said, suddenly pausing. "Do you hear that?"

The sound to which she alluded was the same imitation of the cry of an owlet which the lady had before heard under the walls of the convent.

"These sounds," said Margaret de Hautlieu, "announce that one is near more able than I am to direct us in this matter. I must go forward and speak with him; and this man, our guide, will remain by you for a little space; nor, when he quits your bridle, need you wait for any other signal, but ride forward on the woodland path, and obey the advice and directions which will be given you."

"Stay! stay! Sister Ursula!" cried the Lady

de Berkely. "Abandon me not in this moment of uncertainty and distress!"

"It must be, for the sake of both," returned Margaret de Hautlieu. "I also am in uncertainty — I also am in distress — and patience and obedience are the only virtues which can save us both."

So saying, she struck her horse with the riding-rod, and, moving briskly forward, disappeared among the boughs of a tangled thicket. The Lady of Berkely would have followed her companion, but the cavalier who attended them laid a strong hand upon the bridle of her palfrey, with a look which implied that he would not permit her to proceed in that direction. Terrified, therefore, though she could not exactly state a reason why, the Lady of Berkely remained with her eyes fixed upon the thicket, instinctively, as it were, expecting to see a band of English archers, or rugged Scottish insurgents, issue from its tangled skirts, and doubtful which she should have most considered as the objects of her terror. In the distress of her uncertainty she again attempted to move forward, but the stern check which her attendant again bestowed upon her bridle proved sufficiently that in restraining her wishes the stranger was not likely to spare the strength which he certainly possessed. At length, after some ten minutes had elapsed, the cavalier withdrew his hand from her bridle, and pointing with his lance towards the thicket, through which there winded a narrow, scarce visible path, seemed to intimate to the lady that her road lay in that direction, and that he would no longer prevent her following it.

"Do you not go with me?" said the lady, who,

having been accustomed to this man's company since they left the convent, had by degrees come to look upon him as a sort of protector. He, however, gravely shook his head, as if to excuse complying with a request which it was not in his power to grant, and, turning his steed in a different direction, retired at a pace which soon carried him from her sight. She had then no alternative but to take the path of the thicket which had been followed by Margaret de Hautlieu, nor did she pursue it long before coming in sight of a singular spectacle.

The trees grew wider as the lady advanced, and when she entered the thicket she perceived that, though hedged in as it were by an enclosure of copsewood, it was in the interior altogether occupied by a few of the magnificent trees, such as seemed to have been the ancestors of the forest, and which, though few in number, were sufficient to overshade all the unoccupied ground, by the great extent of their complicated branches. Beneath one of these lay stretched something of a grey colour, which, as it drew itself together, exhibited the figure of a man sheathed in armour, but strangely accoutred, and in a manner so bizarre as to indicate some of the wild fancies peculiar to the knights of that period. His armour was ingeniously painted, so as to represent a skeleton; the ribs being constituted by the corselet and its backpiece. The shield represented an owl with its wings spread, a device which was repeated upon the helmet, which appeared to be completely covered by an image of the same bird of ill omen. But that which was particularly calculated to excite surprise in the spectator was the great height

and thinness of the figure, which, as it arose from the ground and placed itself in an erect posture, seemed rather to resemble an apparition in the act of extricating itself from the grave, than that of an ordinary man rising upon his feet. The horse, too, upon which the lady rode, started back, and snorted, either at the sudden change of posture of this ghastly specimen of chivalry, or disagreeably affected by some odour which accompanied his presence. The lady herself manifested some alarm, for although she did not utterly believe she was in the presence of a supernatural being, yet, among all the strange half-frantic disguises of chivalry, this was assuredly the most uncouth which she had ever seen; and considering how often the knights of the period pushed their dreamy fancies to the borders of insanity, it seemed at best no very safe adventure to meet one accoutred in the emblems of the King of Terrors himself, alone, and in the midst of a wild forest. Be the knight's character and purposes what they might, she resolved, however, to accost him in the language and manner observed in romances upon such occasions, in the hope even that if he were a madman he might prove a peaceable one, and accessible to civility.

"Sir Knight," she said, in as firm a tone as she could assume, "right sorry am I if, by my hasty approach, I have disturbed your solitary meditations. My horse, sensible I think of the presence of yours, brought me hither, without my being aware whom or what I was to encounter."

"I am one," answered the stranger, in a solemn tone, "whom few men seek to meet, till the time comes that they can avoid me no longer."

"You speak, Sir Knight," replied the Lady de Berkely, "according to the dismal character of which it has pleased you to assume the distinction. May I appeal to one whose exterior is so formidable, for the purpose of requesting some directions to guide me through this wild wood; as, for instance, what is the name of the nearest castle, town, or hostelry, and by what course I am best likely to reach such?"

"It is a singular audacity," answered the Knight of the Tomb, "that would enter into conversation with him who is termed the Inexorable, the Unsparing, and the Pitiless, whom even the most miserable forbears to call to his assistance, lest his prayers should be too soon answered."

"Sir Knight," replied the Lady Augusta, "the character which you have assumed, unquestionably for good reasons, dictates to you a peculiar course of speech; but although your part is a sad one, it does not, I should suppose, render it necessary for you to refuse those acts of civility to which you must have bound yourself in taking the high vows of chivalry."

"If you will trust to my guidance," replied the ghastly figure, "there is only one condition upon which I can grant you the information which you require; and that is, that you follow my footsteps without any questions asked as to the tendency of our journey."

"I suppose I must submit to your conditions," she answered, "if you are indeed pleased to take upon yourself the task of being my guide. In my heart I conceive you to be one of the unhappy gentlemen of Scotland, who are now in arms, as they say, for the defence of their liberties. A rash

undertaking has brought me within the sphere of your influence, and now the only favour I have to request of you, against whom I never did or planned any evil, is the guidance which your knowledge of the country permits you easily to afford me in my way to the frontiers of England. Believe that what I may see of your haunts or of your practices shall be to me things invisible, as if they were actually concealed by the sepulchre itself, of the king of which it has pleased you to assume the attributes; and if a sum of money, enough to be the ransom of a wealthy earl, will purchase such a favour at need, such a ransom will be frankly paid, and with as much fidelity as ever it was rendered by a prisoner to the knight by whom he was taken. Do not reject me, princely Bruce — noble Douglas — if indeed it is to either of these that I address myself in this my last extremity — men speak of both as fearful enemies, but generous knights and faithful friends. Let me entreat you to remember how much you would wish your own friends and connections to meet with compassion under similar circumstances, at the hands of the knights of England."

"And have they done so?" replied the knight, in a voice more gloomy than before, "or do you act wisely, while imploring the protection of one whom you believe to be a true Scottish knight, for no other reason than the extreme and extravagant misery of his appearance; — is it, I say, well or wise to remind him of the mode in which the lords of England have treated the lovely maidens and the high-born dames of Scotland? Have not their prison cages been suspended from the battlements of castles, that their captivity might be kept in

view of every base burgher who should desire to look upon the miseries of the noblest peeresses, yea, even the Queen of Scotland?[1] Is this a recollection which can inspire a Scottish knight with compassion towards an English lady? or is it a thought which can do aught but swell the deeply sworn hatred of Edward Plantagenet, the author of these evils, that boils in every drop of Scottish blood which still feels the throb of life? No;—it is all you can expect, if, cold and pitiless as the sepulchre I represent, I leave you unassisted in the helpless condition in which you describe yourself to be."

"You will not be so inhuman," replied the lady: "in doing so, you must surrender every right to honest fame, which you have won either by sword or by lance. You must surrender every pretence to that justice which affects the merit of supporting the weak against the strong. You must make it your principle to avenge the wrongs and tyranny of Edward Plantagenet upon the dames and damosels of England, who have neither access to his councils, nor perhaps give him their approbation in his wars against Scotland."

"It would not then," said the Knight of the Sepulchre, "induce you to depart from your request, should I tell you the evils to which you would subject yourself should we fall into the hands of the English troops, and should they find you under such ill-omened protection as my own?"

"Be assured," said the lady, "the consideration

[1] The Queen of Robert the Bruce, and the Countess of Buchan, by whom, as one of Macduff's descent, he was crowned at Scone, were secured in the manner described.

of such an event does not in the least shake my resolution or desire of confiding in your protection. You may probably know who I am, and may judge how far even Edward would hold himself entitled to extend punishment towards me."

"How am I to know you," replied the ghastly cavalier, "or your circumstances? They must be extraordinary indeed, if they could form a check, either of justice or of humanity, upon the revengeful feelings of Edward. All who know him are well assured that it is no ordinary motive that will induce him to depart from the indulgence of his evil temper. But be it as it may, you, lady, if a lady you be, throw yourself as a burden upon me, and I must discharge myself of my trust as I best may; for this purpose you must be guided implicitly by my directions, which will be given after the fashion of those of the spiritual world, being intimations, rather than detailed instructions, for your conduct, and expressed rather by commands than by any reason or argument. In this way it is possible that I may be of service to you; in any other case, it is most likely that I may fail you at need, and melt from your side like a phantom which dreads the approach of day."

"You cannot be so cruel!" answered the lady. "A gentleman, a knight, and a nobleman — and I persuade myself I speak to all — hath duties which he cannot abandon."

"He has, I grant it, and they are most sacred to me," answered the Spectral Knight; "but I have also duties whose obligations are doubly binding, and to which I must sacrifice those which would otherwise lead me to devote myself to your rescue. The only question is, whether you feel inclined to

accept my protection on the limited terms on which alone I can extend it, or whether you deem it better that each go their own way, and limit themselves to their own resources, and trust the rest to Providence?"

"Alas!" replied the lady, "beset and hard pressed as I am, to ask me to form a resolution for myself is like calling on a wretch, in the act of falling from a precipice, to form a calm judgment by what twig he may best gain the chance of breaking his fall. His answer must necessarily be, that he will cling to that which he can easiest lay hold of, and trust the rest to Providence. I accept, therefore, your offer of protection, in the modified way you are pleased to limit it, and I put my faith in Heaven and in you. To aid me effectually, however, you must know my name and my circumstances."

"All these," answered the Knight of the Sepulchre, "have already been told me, by your late companion; for deem not, young lady, that either beauty, rank, extended domains, unlimited wealth, or the highest accomplishments, can weigh anything in the consideration of him who wears the trappings of the tomb, and whose affections and desires are long buried in the charnel-house."

"May your faith," said the Lady Augusta de Berkely, "be as steady as your words appear severe, and I submit to your guidance, without the least doubt or fear that it will prove otherwise than as I venture to hope."

CHAPTER XV.

Like the dog following its master, when engaged in training him to the sport in which he desires he should excel, the Lady Augusta felt herself occasionally treated with a severity calculated to impress upon her the most implicit obedience and attention to the Knight of the Tomb, in whom she had speedily persuaded herself she saw a principal man among the retainers of Douglas, if not James of Douglas himself. Still, however, the ideas which the lady had formed of the redoubted Douglas were those of a knight highly accomplished in the duties of chivalry, devoted in particular to the service of the fair sex, and altogether unlike the personage with whom she found herself so strangely united, or rather for the present enthralled to. Nevertheless, when, as if to abridge further communication, he turned short into one of the mazes of the wood, and seemed to adopt a pace which, from the nature of the ground, the horse on which the Lady Augusta was mounted had difficulty to keep up with, she followed him with the alarm and speed of the young spaniel, which, from fear rather than fondness, endeavours to keep up with the track of its severe master. The simile, it is true, is not a very polite one, nor entirely becoming an age when women were worshipped with a certain degree of devotion; but such circumstances as the present were also rare,

and the Lady Augusta de Berkely could not but persuade herself that the terrible champion, whose name had been so long the theme of her anxiety, and the terror indeed of the whole country, might be able, some way or other, to accomplish her deliverance. She, therefore, exerted herself to the utmost so as to keep pace with the phantom-like apparition, and followed the knight, as the evening shadow keeps watch upon the belated rustic.

As the lady obviously suffered under the degree of exertion necessary to keep her palfrey from stumbling in these steep and broken paths, the Knight of the Tomb slackened his pace, looked anxiously around him, and muttered apparently to himself, though probably intended for his companion's ear, "There is no occasion for so much haste."

He proceeded at a slower rate, until they seemed to be on the brink of a ravine, being one of many irregularities on the surface of the ground, effected by the sudden torrents peculiar to that country, and which, winding among the trees and copsewood, formed, as it were, a net of places of concealment, opening into each other, so that there was perhaps no place in the world so fit for the purpose of ambuscade. The spot where the borderer Turnbull had made his escape at the hunting-match was one specimen of this broken country, and perhaps connected itself with the various thickets and passes through which the knight and pilgrim occasionally seemed to take their way, though that ravine was at a considerable distance from their present route.

Meanwhile the knight led the way, as if rather with the purpose of bewildering the Lady Augusta

amidst these interminable woods, than following any exact or fixed path. Here they ascended, and anon appeared to descend in the same direction, finding only boundless wildernesses, and varied combinations of tangled woodland scenery. Such part of the country as seemed arable the knight appeared carefully to avoid; yet he could not direct his course with so much certainty but that he occasionally crossed the path of inhabitants and cultivators, who showed a consciousness of so singular a presence, but never, as the lady observed, evinced any symptom of recognition. The inference was obvious, that the spectre knight was known in the country, and that he possessed adherents or accomplices there who were at least so far his friends as to avoid giving any alarm which might be the means of his discovery. The well-imitated cry of the night-owl, too frequent a guest in the wilderness that its call should be a subject of surprise, seemed to be a signal generally understood among them; for it was heard in different parts of the wood, and the Lady Augusta, experienced in such journeys by her former travels under the guidance of the minstrel Bertram, was led to observe that, on hearing such wild notes, her guide changed the direction of his course, and betook himself to paths which led through deeper wilds and more impenetrable thickets. This happened so often, that a new alarm came upon the unfortunate pilgrim, which suggested other motives of terror. Was she not the confidant, and almost the tool, of some artful design, laid with a view to an extensive operation, which was destined to terminate, as the efforts of Douglas had before done, in the surprise of his hereditary castle, the

massacre of the English garrison — and, finally, in the dishonour and death of that Sir John de Walton upon whose fate she had long believed, or taught herself to believe, that her own was dependent?

It no sooner flashed across the mind of the Lady Augusta that she was engaged in some such conspiracy with a Scottish insurgent, than she shuddered at the consequences of the dark transactions in which she had now become involved, and which appeared to have a tendency so very different from what she had at first apprehended.

The hours of the morning of this remarkable day, being that of Palm Sunday, were thus drawn out in wandering from place to place; while the Lady de Berkely occasionally interposed by petitions for liberty, which she endeavoured to express in the most moving and pathetic manner, and by offers of wealth and treasures, to which no answer whatever was returned by her strange guide.

At length, as if worn out by his captive's importunity, the knight, coming close up to the bridle rein of the Lady Augusta, said in a solemn tone —

"I am, as you may well believe, none of those knights who roam through wood and wild seeking adventures, by which I may obtain grace in the eyes of a fair lady: Yet will I to a certain degree grant the request which thou dost solicit so anxiously, and the arbitration of thy fate shall depend upon the pleasure of him to whose will thou hast expressed thyself ready to submit thine own. I will, on our arrival at the place of our destination, which is now at hand, write to Sir John de Walton, and send my letter, together with thy fair

self, by a special messenger. He will, no doubt, speedily attend our summons, and thou shalt thyself be satisfied, that even he who has as yet appeared deaf to entreaty, and insensible to earthly affections, has still some sympathy for beauty and for virtue. I will put the choice of safety, and thy future happiness, into thine own hands, and those of the man whom thou hast chosen; and thou mayst select which thou wilt betwixt those and misery."

While he thus spoke, one of those ravines or clefts in the earth seemed to yawn before them, and entering it at the upper end, the spectre knight, with an attention which he had not yet shown, guided the lady's courser by the rein down the broken and steep path by which alone the bottom of the tangled dingle was accessible.

When placed on firm ground after the dangers of a descent in which her palfrey seemed to be sustained by the personal strength and address of the singular being who had hold of the bridle, the lady looked with some astonishment at a place so well adapted for concealment as that which she had now reached. It appeared evident that it was used for this purpose, for more than one stifled answer was given to a very low bugle-note emitted by the Knight of the Tomb; and when the same note was repeated, about half a score of armed men, some wearing the dress of soldiers, others those of shepherds and agriculturists, showed themselves imperfectly, as if acknowledging the summons.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Hail to you, my gallant friends!" said the Knight of the Tomb to his companions, who seemed to welcome him with the eagerness of men engaged in the same perilous undertaking. "The winter has passed over, the festival of Palm Sunday is come, and as surely as the ice and snow of this season shall not remain to chill the earth through the ensuing summer, so surely we, in a few hours, keep our word to those Southern braggarts, who think their language of boasting and malice has as much force over our Scottish bosoms as the blast possesses over the autumn fruits. But it is not so. While we choose to remain concealed, they may as vainly seek to descry us, as a housewife would search for the needle she has dropped among the withered foliage of yon gigantic oak. Yet a few hours, and the lost needle shall become the exterminating sword of the Genius of Scotland, avenging ten thousand injuries, and especially the life of the gallant Lord Douglas, cruelly done to death as an exile from his native country."

An exclamation between a yell and a groan burst from the assembled retainers of Douglas, upon being reminded of the recent death of their chieftain; while they seemed at the same time sensible of the necessity of making little noise, lest they should give the alarm to some of the

numerous English parties which were then traversing different parts of the forest. The acclamation, so cautiously uttered, had scarce died away in silence, when the Knight of the Tomb, or, to call him by his proper name, Sir James Douglas, again addressed his handful of faithful followers.

"One effort, my friends, may yet be made to end our strife with the Southron without bloodshed. Fate has within a few hours thrown into my power the young heiress of Berkely, for whose sake it is said Sir John de Walton keeps with such obstinacy the castle which is mine by inheritance. Is there one among you who dare go, as the honourable escort of Augusta de Berkely, bearing a letter, explaining the terms on which I am willing to restore her to her lover, to freedom, and to her English lordships?"

"If there is none other," said a tall man, dressed in the tattered attire of a woodsman, and being, in fact, no other than the very Michael Turnbull who had already given so extraordinary a proof of his undaunted manhood, "I will gladly be the person who will be the lady's henchman on this expedition."

"Thou art never wanting," said the Douglas, "where a manly deed is to be done; but remember, this lady must pledge to us her word and oath that she will hold herself our faithful prisoner, rescue or no rescue; that she will consider herself as pledged for the life, freedom, and fair usage of Michael Turnbull; and that if Sir John de Walton refuse my terms, she must hold herself obliged to return with Turnbull to our presence, in order to be disposed of at our pleasure."

There was much in these conditions which

struck the Lady Augusta with natural doubt and horror; nevertheless, strange as it may seem, the declaration of the Douglas gave a species of decision to her situation which might have otherwise been unattainable; and from the high opinion which she entertained of the Douglas's chivalry, she could not bring herself to think that any part which he might play in the approaching drama would be other than that which a perfect good knight would, under all circumstances, maintain towards his enemy. Even with respect to De Walton, she felt herself relieved of a painful difficulty. The idea of her being discovered by the knight himself, in a male disguise, had preyed upon her spirits; and she felt as if guilty of a departure from the laws of womanhood, in having extended her favour towards him beyond maidenly limits; a step, too, which might tend to lessen her in the eyes of the lover for whom she had hazarded so much.

> The heart, she said, is lightly prized,
> That is but lightly won;
> And long shall mourn the heartless man,
> That leaves his love too soon.

On the other hand, to be brought before him as a prisoner was indeed a circumstance equally perplexing and unpleasing, but it was one which was beyond her control, and the Douglas, into whose hands she had fallen, appeared to her to represent the deity in the play, whose entrance was almost sufficient to bring its perplexities to a conclusion; she therefore not unwillingly submitted to take what oaths and promises were required by the party in whose hands she found herself, and ac-

cordingly engaged to be a true prisoner, whatever might occur. Meantime she strictly obeyed the directions of those who had her motions at command, devoutly praying that circumstances, in themselves so adverse, might nevertheless work together for the safety of her lover and her own freedom.

A pause ensued, during which a slight repast was placed before the Lady Augusta, who was well-nigh exhausted with the fatigues of her journey.

Douglas and his partisans, meanwhile, whispered together, as if unwilling she should hear their conference; while, to purchase their goodwill, if possible, she studiously avoided every appearance of listening.

After some conversation, Turnbull, who appeared to consider the lady as peculiarly his charge, said to her in a harsh voice, "Do not fear, lady; no wrong shall be done you; nevertheless, you must be content for a space to be blindfolded."

She submitted to this in silent terror; and the trooper, wrapping part of a mantle round her head, did not assist her to remount her palfrey, but lent her his arm to support her in this blinded state.

CHAPTER XVII.

The ground which they traversed was, as Lady Augusta could feel, very broken and uneven, and sometimes, as she thought, incumbered with ruins, which were difficult to surmount. The strength of her comrade assisted her forward on such occasions; but his help was so roughly administered, that the lady once or twice, in fear or suffering, was compelled to groan or sigh heavily, whatever was her desire to suppress such evidence of the apprehension which she underwent, or the pain which she endured. Presently, upon an occasion of this kind, she was distinctly sensible that the rough woodsman was removed from her side, and another of the party substituted in his stead, whose voice, more gentle than that of his companion, she thought she had lately heard.

"Noble lady," were the words, "fear not the slightest injury at our hands, and accept of my ministry instead of that of my henchman, who has gone forward with our letter; do not think me presuming on my situation if I bear you in my arms through ruins where you could not easily move alone and blindfold."

At the same time the Lady Augusta Berkely felt herself raised from the earth in the strong arms of a man, and borne onward with the utmost gentleness, without the necessity of making those painful exertions which had been formerly required. She

was ashamed of her situation; but, however delicate, it was no time to give vent to complaints, which might have given offence to persons whom it was her interest to conciliate. She, therefore, submitted to necessity, and heard the following words whispered in her ear.

"Fear nothing; there is no evil intended you; nor shall Sir John de Walton, if he loves you as you deserve at his hand, receive any harm on our part. We call on him but to do justice to ourselves and to you; and be assured you will best accomplish your own happiness by aiding our views, which are equally in favour of your wishes and your freedom."

The Lady Augusta would have made some answer to this, but her breath, betwixt fear and the speed with which she was transported, refused to permit her to use intelligible accents. Meantime she began to be sensible that she was enclosed within some building, and probably a ruinous one — for although the mode of her transportation no longer permitted her to ascertain the nature of her path in any respect distinctly, yet the absence of the external air — which was, however, sometimes excluded, and sometimes admitted in furious gusts — intimated that she was conducted through buildings partly entire, and in other places admitting the wind through wide rents and gaps. In one place it seemed to the lady as if she passed through a considerable body of people, all of whom observed silence, although there was sometimes heard among them a murmur, to which every one present in some degree contributed, although the general sound did not exceed a whisper. Her situation made her attend to every circumstance,

and she did not fail to observe that these persons made way for him who bore her, until at length she became sensible that he descended by the regular steps of a stair, and that she was now alone excepting his company. Arrived, as it appeared to the lady, on more level ground, they proceeded on their singular road by a course which appeared neither direct nor easy, and through an atmosphere which was close to a smothering degree, and felt at the same time damp and disagreeable, as if from the vapours of a new-made grave. Her guide again spoke.

"Bear up, Lady Augusta, for a little longer, and continue to endure that atmosphere which must be one day common to us all. By the necessity of my situation, I must resign my present office to your original guide, and can only give you my assurance, that neither he, nor any one else, shall offer you the least incivility or insult — and on this you may rely, on the faith of a man of honour."

He placed her, as he said these words, upon the soft turf, and, to her infinite refreshment, made her sensible that she was once more in the open air, and free from the smothering atmosphere which had before oppressed her like that of a charnel-house. At the same time, she breathed in a whisper an anxious wish that she might be permitted to disincumber herself from the folds of the mantle, which excluded almost the power of breathing, though intended only to prevent her seeing by what road she travelled. She immediately found it unfolded, agreeably to her request, and hastened, with uncovered eyes, to take note of the scene around her.

It was overshadowed by thick oak-trees, among which stood some remnants of buildings, or what might have seemed such, being perhaps the same in which she had been lately wandering. A clear fountain of living water bubbled forth from under the twisted roots of one of those trees, and offered the lady the opportunity of a draught of the pure element, and in which she also bathed her face, which had received more than one scratch in the course of her journey, in spite of the care, and almost the tenderness, with which she had latterly been borne along. The cool water speedily stopped the bleeding of those trifling injuries, and the application served at the same time to recall the scattered senses of the damsel herself. Her first idea was, whether an attempt to escape, if such should appear possible, was not advisable. A moment's reflection, however, satisfied her that such a scheme was not to be thought of; and such second thoughts were confirmed by the approach of the gigantic form of the huntsman Turnbull, the rough tones of whose voice were heard before his figure was obvious to her eye.

"Were you impatient for my return, fair lady? Such as I," he continued in an ironical tone of voice, "who are foremost in the chase of wild stags and silvan cattle, are not in use to lag behind, when fair ladies, like you, are the objects of pursuit; and if I am not so constant in my attendance as you might expect, believe me, it is because I was engaged in another matter, to which I must sacrifice for a little even the duty of attending on you."

"I offer no resistance," said the lady; "forbear, however, in discharging thy duty, to augment my

uneasiness by thy conversation, for thy master hath pledged me his word that he will not suffer me to be alarmed or ill treated."

"Nay, fair one," replied the huntsman, "I ever thought it was fit to make interest by soft words with fair ladies; but if you like it not, I have no such pleasure in hunting for fine holiday terms, but that I can with equal ease hold myself silent. Come, then, since we must wait upon this lover of yours ere morning closes, and learn his last resolution touching a matter which is become so strangely complicated, I will hold no more intercourse with you as a female, but talk to you as a person of sense, although an Englishwoman."

"You will," replied the lady, "best fulfil the intentions of those by whose orders you act, by holding no society with me whatever, otherwise than is necessary in the character of guide."

The man lowered his brows, yet seemed to assent to what the Lady of Berkely proposed, and remained silent as they for some time pursued their course, each pondering over their own share of meditation, which probably turned upon matters essentially different. At length the loud blast of a bugle was heard at no great distance from the unsocial fellow-travellers. "That is the person we seek," said Turnbull; "I know his blast from any other who frequents this forest, and my orders are to bring you to speech of him."

The blood darted rapidly through the lady's veins at the thought of being thus unceremoniously presented to the knight, in whose favour she had confessed a rash preference more agreeable to the manners of those times, when exaggerated sentiments often inspired actions of extravagant

generosity, than in our days, when everything is accounted absurd which does not turn upon a motive connected with the immediate selfish interests of the actor himself. When Turnbull, therefore, winded his horn, as if in answer to the blast which they had heard, the lady was disposed to fly at the first impulse of shame and of fear. Turnbull perceived her intention, and caught hold of her with no very gentle grasp, saying — "Nay, lady, it is to be understood that you play your own part in the drama, which, unless you continue on the stage, will conclude unsatisfactorily to us all, in a combat *à outrance* between your lover and me, when it will appear which of us is most worthy of your favour."

"I will be patient," said the lady, bethinking her that even this strange man's presence, and the compulsion which he appeared to use towards her, was a sort of excuse to her female scruples, for coming into the presence of her lover, at least at her first appearance before him, in a disguise which her feelings confessed was not extremely decorous, or reconcilable to the dignity of her sex.

The moment after these thoughts had passed through her mind, the tramp of a horse was heard approaching; and Sir John de Walton pressing through the trees, became aware of the presence of his lady, captive, as it seemed, in the grasp of a Scottish outlaw, who was only known to him by his former audacity at the hunting-match.

His surprise and joy only supplied the knight with those hasty expressions — "Caitiff, let go thy hold! or die in thy profane attempt to control the motions of one whom the very sun in heaven

should be proud to obey." At the same time, apprehensive that the huntsman might hurry the lady from his sight by means of some entangled path — such as upon a former occasion had served him for escape — Sir John de Walton dropped his cumbrous lance, of which the trees did not permit him the perfect use, and, springing from his horse, approached Turnbull with his drawn sword.

The Scottishman, keeping his left hand still upon the lady's mantle, uplifted with his right his battle-axe, or Jedwood staff, for the purpose of parrying and returning the blow of his antagonist; but the lady spoke.

"Sir John de Walton," she said, "for Heaven's sake, forbear all violence, till you hear upon what pacific object I am brought hither, and by what peaceful means these wars may be put an end to. This man, though an enemy of yours, has been to me a civil and respectful guardian; and I entreat you to forbear him while he speaks the purpose for which he has brought me hither."

"To speak of compulsion and the Lady de Berkely in the same breath would itself be cause enough for instant death," said the Governor of Douglas Castle; "but you command, lady, and I spare his insignificant life, although I have causes of complaint against him, the least of which were good warrant, had he a thousand lives, for the forfeiture of them all."

"John de Walton," replied Turnbull, "this lady well knows that no fear of thee operates in my mind to render this a peaceful meeting; and were I not withheld by other circumstances of great consideration to the Douglas, as well as thyself, I should have no more fear in facing the utmost

thou couldst do, than I have now in levelling that sapling to the earth it grows upon."

So saying, Michael Turnbull raised his battle-axe, and struck from a neighbouring oak-tree a branch, well-nigh as thick as a man's arm, which (with all its twigs and leaves) rushed to the ground between De Walton and the Scotchman, giving a singular instance of the keenness of his weapon, and the strength and dexterity with which he used it.

"Let there be truce, then, between us, good fellow," said Sir John de Walton, "since it is the lady's pleasure that such should be the case, and let me know what thou hast to say to me respecting her?"

"On that subject," said Turnbull, "my words are few, but mark them, Sir Englishman. The Lady Augusta Berkely, wandering in this country, has become a prisoner of the noble Lord Douglas, the rightful inheritor of the castle and lordship, and he finds himself obliged to attach to the liberty of this lady the following conditions, being in all respects such as good and lawful warfare entitles a knight to exact. That is to say, in all honour and safety the Lady Augusta shall be delivered to Sir John de Walton, or those whom he shall name for the purpose of receiving her. On the other hand, the Castle of Douglas itself, together with all outposts or garrisons thereunto belonging, shall be made over and surrendered by Sir John de Walton, in the same situation, and containing the same provisions and artillery, as are now within their walls; and the space of a month of truce shall be permitted to Sir James Douglas and Sir John de Walton further to regulate the terms of surrender on both parts, having first plighted their knightly

word and oath, that in the exchange of the honourable lady for the foresaid castle lies the full import of the present agreement, and that every other subject of dispute shall, at the pleasure of the noble knights foresaid, be honourably compounded and agreed betwixt them; or, at their pleasure, settled knightly by single combat, according to usage and in a fair field, before any honourable person that may possess power enough to preside."

It is not easy to conceive the astonishment of Sir John de Walton at hearing the contents of this extraordinary cartel; he looked towards the Lady of Berkely with that aspect of despair with which a criminal may be supposed to see his guardian angel prepare for departure. Through her mind also similar ideas flowed, as if they contained a concession of what she had considered as the summit of her wishes, but under conditions disgraceful to her lover, like the cherub's fiery sword of yore, which was a barrier between our first parents and the blessings of Paradise. Sir John de Walton, after a moment's hesitation, broke silence in these words:—

"Noble lady, you may be surprised if a condition be imposed upon me, having for its object your freedom; and if Sir John de Walton, already standing under those obligations to you which he is proud of acknowledging, should yet hesitate on accepting, with the utmost eagerness, what must insure your restoration to freedom and independence; but so it is, that the words now spoken have thrilled in mine ear without reaching to my understanding, and I must pray the Lady of Berkely for pardon if I take time to reconsider them for a short space."

"And I," replied Turnbull, "have only power to allow you half an hour for the consideration of an offer, in accepting which, methinks, you should jump shoulder-height, instead of asking any time for reflection. What does this cartel exact, save what your duty as a knight implicitly obliges you to? You have engaged yourself to become the agent of the tyrant Edward, in holding Douglas Castle, as his commander, to the prejudice of the Scottish nation, and of the Knight of Douglas Dale, who never, as a community or as an individual, were guilty of the least injury towards you; you are therefore prosecuting a false path, unworthy of a good knight. On the other hand, the freedom and safety of your lady is now proposed to be pledged to you, with a full assurance of her liberty and honour, on consideration of your withdrawing from the unjust line of conduct in which you have suffered yourself to be imprudently engaged. If you persevere in it, you place your own honour, and the lady's happiness, in the hands of men whom you have done everything in your power to render desperate, and whom, thus irritated, it is most probable you may find such."

"It is not from thee at least," said the knight, "that I shall learn to estimate the manner in which Douglas will explain the laws of war, or De Walton receive them at his dictating."

"I am not, then," said Turnbull, "received as a friendly messenger? Farewell, and think of this lady as being in any hands but those which are safe, while you make up at leisure your mind upon the message I have brought you. Come, madam, we must be gone."

So saying, he seized upon the lady's hand, and pulled her, as if to force her to withdraw. The lady had stood motionless, and almost senseless, while these speeches were exchanged between the warriors; but when she felt the grasp of Michael Turnbull, she exclaimed, like one almost beside herself with fear — "Help me, De Walton!"

The knight, stung to instant rage, assaulted the forester with the utmost fury, and dealt him with his long sword, almost at unawares, two or three heavy blows, by which he was so wounded that he sank backwards in the thicket, and De Walton was about to despatch him, when he was prevented by the anxious cry of the lady — "Alas! De Walton, what have you done? This man was only an ambassador, and should have passed free from injury, while he confined himself to the delivery of what he was charged with; and if thou hast slain him, who knows how frightful may prove the vengeance exacted!"

The voice of the lady seemed to recover the huntsman from the effects of the blows he had received; he sprang on his feet, saying — "Never mind me, nor think of my becoming the means of making mischief. The knight, in his haste, spoke without giving me warning and defiance, which gave him an advantage which, I think, he would otherwise have scorned to have taken in such a case. I will renew the combat on fairer terms, or call another champion, as the knight pleases." With these words he disappeared.

"Fear not, empress of De Walton's thoughts," answered the knight, "but believe, that if we regain together the shelter of Douglas Castle, and the safeguard of St. George's Cross, thou mayst

laugh at all. And if you can but pardon, what I shall never be able to forgive myself, the mole-like blindness which did not recognise the sun while under a temporary eclipse, the task cannot be named too hard for mortal valour to achieve which I shall not willingly undertake, to wipe out the memory of my grievous fault."

"Mention it no more," said the lady; "it is not at such a time as this, when our lives are for the moment at stake, that quarrels upon slighter topics are to be recurred to. I can tell you, if you do not yet know, that the Scots are in arms in this vicinity, and that even the earth has yawned to conceal them from the sight of your garrison."

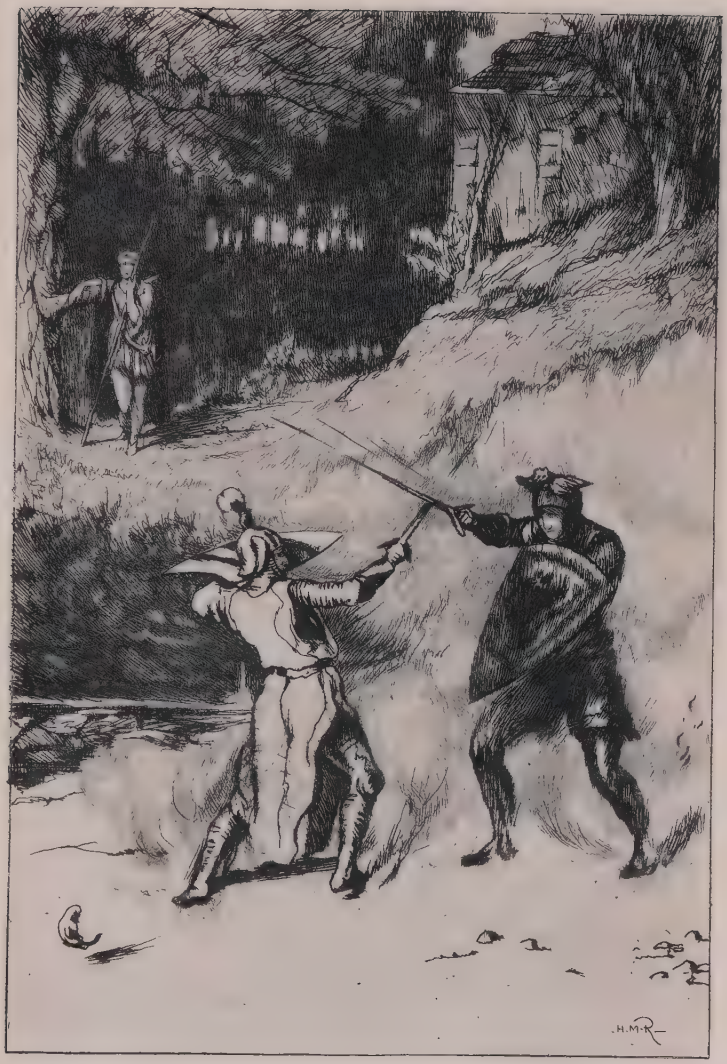
"Let it yawn, then," said Sir John de Walton, "and suffer every fiend in the infernal abyss to escape from his prison-house and reinforce our enemies — still, fairest, having received in thee a pearl of matchless price, my spurs shall be hacked from my heels by the basest scullion, if I turn my horse's head to the rear before the utmost force these ruffians can assemble, either upon earth or from underneath it. In thy name I defy them all to instant combat."

As Sir John de Walton pronounced these last words, in something of an exalted tone, a tall cavalier, arrayed in black armour of the simplest form, stepped forth from that part of the thicket where Turnbull had disappeared. "I am," he said, "James of Douglas, and your challenge is accepted. I, the challenged, name the arms our knightly weapons as we now wear them, and our place of combat this field or dingle called the Bloody Sykes, the time being instant, and the

combatants, like true knights, foregoing each advantage on either side." [1]

"So be it, in God's name," said the English knight, who, though surprised at being called upon to so sudden an encounter with so formidable a warrior as young Douglas, was too proud to dream of avoiding the combat. Making a sign to the lady to retire behind him, that he might not lose the advantage which he had gained by setting her at liberty from the forester, he drew his sword, and, with a deliberate and prepared attitude of offence, moved slowly to the encounter. It was a dreadful one, for the courage and skill both of the native Lord of Douglas Dale and of De Walton were among the most renowned of the times, and perhaps the world of chivalry could hardly have produced two knights more famous. Their blows fell as if urged by some mighty engine, where they were met and parried with equal strength and dexterity; nor seemed it likely, in the course of ten minutes' encounter, that an advantage would be gained by either combatant over the other. An instant they stopped by mutually implied assent, as it seemed, for the purpose of taking breath, during which Douglas said, "I beg that this noble lady may understand, that her own freedom is no way concerned in the present contest, which entirely regards the injustice done by this Sir John de Walton, and by his nation of England, to the memory of my father, and to my own natural rights."

[1] The ominous name of Bloodmire-Sink, or Syke, marks a narrow hollow to the north-west of Douglas Castle, from which it is distant about the third of a mile. Mr. Haddow states that, according to local tradition, the name was given in consequence of Sir James Douglas having at this spot intercepted and slain part of the garrison of the castle while De Walton was in command.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"You are generous, Sir Knight," replied the lady; "but in what circumstances do you place me, if you deprive me of my protector by death or captivity, and leave me alone in a foreign land?"

"If such should be the event of the combat," replied Sir James, "the Douglas himself, lady, will safely restore thee to thy native land; for never did his sword do an injury for which he was not willing to make amends with the same weapon; and if Sir John de Walton will make the slightest admission that he renounces maintaining the present strife, were it only by yielding up a feather from the plume of his helmet, Douglas will renounce every purpose on his part which can touch the lady's honour or safety, and the combat may be suspended until the national quarrel again brings us together."

Sir John de Walton pondered a moment, and the lady, although she did not speak, looked at him with eyes which plainly expressed how much she wished that he would choose the less hazardous alternative. But the knight's own scruples prevented his bringing the case to so favourable an arbitrament.

"Never shall it be said of Sir John de Walton," he replied, "that he compromised, in the slightest degree, his own honour, or that of his country. This battle may end in my defeat, or rather death, and in that case my earthly prospects are closed, and I resign to Douglas, with my last breath, the charge of the Lady Augusta, trusting that he will defend her with his life, and find the means of replacing her with safety in the halls of her fathers. But while I survive, she may have a better, but will not need another protector than

he who is honoured by being her own choice, nor will I yield up, were it a plume from my helmet, implying that I have maintained an unjust quarrel, either in the cause of England or of the fairest of her daughters. Thus far alone I will concede to Douglas — an instant truce, provided the lady shall not be interrupted in her retreat to England, and the combat be fought out upon another day. The Castle and territory of Douglas is the property of Edward of England, the governor in his name is the rightful governor, and on this point I will fight while my eyelids are unclosed."

"Time flies," said Douglas, "without waiting for our resolves; nor is there any part of his motions of such value as that which is passing with every breath of vital air which we presently draw. Why should we adjourn till to-morrow that which can be as well finished to-day? Will our swords be sharper, or our arms stronger to wield them, than they are at this moment? Douglas will do all which knight can do to succour a lady in distress; but he will not grant to her knight the slightest mark of deference, which Sir John de Walton vainly supposes himself able to extort by force of arms."

With these words, the knights engaged once more in mortal combat, and the lady felt uncertain whether she should attempt her escape through the devious paths of the wood, or abide the issue of this obstinate fight. It was rather her desire to see the fate of Sir John de Walton, than any other consideration, which induced her to remain, as if fascinated, upon the spot, where one of the fiercest quarrels ever fought was disputed by two of the bravest champions that ever drew sword. At last

the lady attempted to put a stop to the combat, by appealing to the bells which began to ring for the service of the day, which was Palm Sunday.

"For Heaven's sake," she said — "for your own sakes, and for that of lady's love, and the duties of chivalry, hold your hands only for an hour, and take chance, that where strength is so equal, means will be found of converting the truce into a solid peace. Think this is Palm Sunday, and will you defile with blood such a peculiar festival of Christianity? Intermit your feud at least so far as to pass to the nearest church, bearing with you branches, not in the ostentatious mode of earthly conquerors, but as rendering due homage to the rules of the blessed Church, and the institutions of our holy religion."

"I was on my road, fair lady, for that purpose, to the holy church of Douglas," said the Englishman, "when I was so fortunate as to meet you at this place; nor do I object to proceed thither even now, holding truce for an hour, and I fear not to find there friends to whom I can commit you with assurance of safety, in case I am unfortunate in the combat which is now broken off, to be resumed after the service of the day."

"I also assent," said the Douglas, "to a truce for such short space; nor do I fear that there may be good Christians enough at the church, who will not see their master overpowered by odds. Let us go thither, and each take the chance of what Heaven shall please to send us."

From these words, Sir John de Walton little doubted that Douglas had assured himself of a party among those who should there assemble; but he doubted not of so many of the garrison being

present as would bridle every attempt at rising, and the risk, he thought, was worth incurring, since he should thereby secure an opportunity to place Lady Augusta de Berkely in safety, at least so far as to make her liberty depend on the event of a general conflict, instead of the precarious issue of a combat between himself and Douglas.

Both these distinguished knights were inwardly of opinion that the proposal of the lady, though it relieved them from their present conflict, by no means bound them to abstain from the consequences which an accession of force might add to their general strength, and each relied upon his superiority, in some degree provided for by their previous proceedings. Sir John de Walton made almost certain of meeting with several of his bands of soldiers, who were scouring the country and traversing the woods by his direction; and Douglas, it may be supposed, had not ventured himself in person where a price was set upon his head, without being attended by a sufficient number of approved adherents, placed in more or less connection with each other, and stationed for mutual support. Each, therefore, entertained well-grounded hopes, that, by adopting the truce proposed, he would insure himself an advantage over his antagonist, although neither exactly knew in what manner or to what extent this success was to be obtained.

CHAPTER XVIII.

His talk was of another world — his bodements
Strange, doubtful, and mysterious; those who heard him
Listen'd as to a man in feverish dreams,
Who speaks of other objects than the present,
And mutters like to him who sees a vision.

Old Play.

On the same Palm Sunday when De Walton and Douglas measured together their mighty swords, the minstrel Bertram was busied with the ancient Book of Prophecies, which we have already mentioned as the supposed composition of Thomas the Rhymer, but not without many anxieties as to the fate of his lady, and the events which were passing around him. As a minstrel, he was desirous of an auditor to enter into the discoveries which he should make in that mystic volume, as well as to assist in passing away the time. Sir John de Walton had furnished him, in Gilbert Greenleaf the archer, with one who was well contented to play the listener "from morn to dewy eve," provided a flask of Gascon wine, or a stoup of good English ale, remained on the board. It may be remembered that De Walton, when he dismissed the minstrel from the dungeon, was sensible that he owed him some compensation for the causeless suspicion which had dictated his imprisonment, more particularly as he was a valued servant, and had shown himself the faithful confidant of the Lady Augusta de Berkely, and the person who

was, moreover, likely to know all the motives and circumstances of her Scottish journey. To secure his good wishes was, therefore, politic; and De Walton had intimated to his faithful archer that he was to lay aside all suspicion of Bertram, but at the same time keep him in sight, and, if possible, in good humour with the governor of the castle, and his adherents. Greenleaf accordingly had no doubt in his own mind that the only way to please a minstrel was to listen with patience and commendation to the lays which he liked best to sing, or the tales which he most loved to tell; and in order to insure the execution of his master's commands, he judged it necessary to demand of the butler such store of good liquor as could not fail to enhance the pleasure of his society.

Having thus fortified himself with the means of bearing a long interview with the minstrel, Gilbert Greenleaf proposed to confer upon him the bounty of an early breakfast, which, if it pleased him, they might wash down with a cup of sack, and, having his master's commands to show the minstrel anything about the castle which he might wish to see, refresh their overwearied spirits by attending a part of the garrison of Douglas to the service of the day, which, as we have already seen, was of peculiar sanctity. Against such a proposal the minstrel, a good Christian by profession, and, by his connection with the joyous science, a good fellow, having no objections to offer, the two comrades, who had formerly little good-will towards each other, commenced their morning's repast on that fated Palm Sunday, with all manner of cordiality and good-fellowship.

"Do not believe, worthy minstrel," said the

archer, "that my master in any respect disparages your worth or rank in referring you for company or conversation to so poor a man as myself. It is true, I am no officer of this garrison; yet for an old archer, who, for these thirty years, has lived by bow and bowstring, I do not (Our Lady make me thankful!) hold less share in the grace of Sir John de Walton, the Earl of Pembroke, and other approved good soldiers, than many of those giddy young men on whom commissions are conferred, and to whom confidences are intrusted, not on account of what they have done, but what their ancestors have done before them. I pray you to notice among them one youth placed at our head in De Walton's absence, and who bears the honoured name of Aymer de Valence, being the same with that of the Earl of Pembroke, of whom I have spoken; this knight has also a brisk young page, whom men call Fabian Harbothel."

"Is it to these gentlemen that your censure applies?" answered the minstrel. "I should have judged differently, having never, in the course of my experience, seen a young man more courteous and amiable than the young knight you named."

"I nothing dispute that it may be so," said the archer, hastening to amend the false step which he had made; "but in order that it should be so, it will be necessary that he conform to the usages of his uncle, taking the advice of experienced old soldiers in the emergencies which may present themselves; and not believing, that the knowledge which it takes many years of observation to acquire, can be at once conferred by the slap of the flat of a sword, and the magic words, 'Rise up, Sir Arthur'—or however the case may be."

"Doubt not, Sir Archer," replied Bertram, "that I am fully aware of the advantage to be derived from conversing with men of experience like you: it benefiteth men of every persuasion, and I myself am oft reduced to lament my want of sufficient knowledge of armorial bearings, signs, and cognisances, and would right fain have thy assistance, where I am a stranger alike to the names of places, of persons, and description of banners and emblems by which great families are distinguished from each other, so absolutely necessary to the accomplishment of my present task."

"Pennons and banners," answered the archer, "I have seen right many, and can assign, as is a soldier's wont, the name of the leader to the emblem under which he musters his followers; nevertheless, worthy minstrel, I cannot presume to understand what you call prophecies, with or under warranted authority of old painted books, expositions of dreams, oracles, revelations, invocations of damned spirits, judicials, astrologicals, and other gross and palpable offences, whereby men, pretending to have the assistance of the devil, do impose upon the common people, in spite of the warnings of the Privy Council; not, however, that I suspect you, worthy minstrel, of busying yourself with these attempts to explain futurity, which are dangerous attempts, and may be truly said to be penal, and part of treason."

"There is something in what you say," replied the minstrel; "yet it applieth not to books and manuscripts such as I have been consulting; part of which things therein written having already come to pass, authorise us surely to expect the completion of the rest; nor would I have much

difficulty in showing you from this volume, that enough has been already proved true to entitle us to look with certainty to the accomplishment of that which remains."

"I should be glad to hear that," answered the archer, who entertained little more than a soldier's belief respecting prophecies and auguries, but yet cared not bluntly to contradict the minstrel upon such subjects, as he had been instructed by Sir John de Walton to comply with his humour. Accordingly the minstrel began to recite verses, which, in our time, the ablest interpreter could not make sense out of.

"When the cock crows, keep well his comb,
For the fox and the fulmart they are false both.
When the raven and the rook have rounded together,
And the kid in his cliff shall accord to the same,
Then shall they be bold, and soon to battle thereafter.
Then the birds of the raven rugs and reives,
And the leal men of Lothian are louping on their horse;
Then shall the poor people be spoiled full near,
And the Abbeys be burnt truly that stand upon Tweed;
They shall burn and slay, and great reif make;
There shall no poor man who say whose man he is:
Then shall the land be lawless, for love there is none.
Then falset shall have foot fully five years;
Then truth surely shall be tint, and none shall lippen to other;
The one cousing shall not trust the other,
Not the son the father, nor the father the son;
For to have his goods he would have him hanged."
&c. &c. &c.

The archer listened to these mystic prognostications, which were not the less wearisome that they were, in a considerable degree, unintelligible; at the same time subduing his Hotspur-like disposition to tire of the recitation, yet at brief intervals

comforting himself with an application to the wine flagon, and enduring as he might what he neither understood nor took interest in. Meanwhile the minstrel proceeded with his explanation of the dubious and imperfect vaticinations of which we have given a sufficient specimen.

"Could you wish," said he to Greenleaf, "a more exact description of the miseries which have passed over Scotland in these latter days? Have not these the raven and rook, the fox and the fulmart, explained; either because the nature of the birds or beasts bear an individual resemblance to those of the knights who display them on their banners, or otherwise are bodied forth by actual blazonry on their shields, and come openly into the field to ravage and destroy? Is not the total disunion of the land plainly indicated by these words, that connections of blood shall be broken asunder, that kinsmen shall not trust each other, and that the father and son, instead of putting faith in their natural connection, shall seek each other's life, in order to enjoy his inheritance? The *leal men* of Lothian are distinctly mentioned as taking arms, and there is plainly allusion to the other events of these late Scottish troubles. The death of this last William is obscurely intimated under the type of a hound, which was that good lord's occasional cognisance.

> The hound that was harmed then muzzled shall be,
> Who loved him worst shall weep for his wreck;
> Yet shall a whelp rise of the same race,
> That rudely shall roar, and rule the whole north,
> And quit the whole quarrel of old deeds done,
> Though he from his hold be kept back awhile.
> True Thomas told me this in a troublesome time,
> In a harvest morning at Eldoun hills.

This hath a meaning, Sir Archer," continued the minstrel, " and which flies as directly to its mark as one of your own arrows, although there may be some want of wisdom in making the direct explication. Being, however, upon assurance with you, I do not hesitate to tell you, that in my opinion this lion's whelp that waits its time means this same celebrated Scottish prince, Robert the Bruce, who, though repeatedly defeated, has still, while hunted with bloodhounds, and surrounded by enemies of every sort, maintained his pretensions to the crown of Scotland, in despite of King Edward, now reigning."

" Minstrel," answered the soldier, " you are my guest, and we have sat down together as friends to this simple meal in good comradeship. I must tell thee, however, though I am loth to disturb our harmony, that thou art the first who hast adventured to speak a word before Gilbert Greenleaf in favour of that outlawed traitor, Robert Bruce, who has by his seditions so long disturbed the peace of this realm. Take my advice, and be silent on this topic; for, believe me, the sword of a true English archer will spring from its scabbard without consent of its master, should it hear aught said to the disparagement of bonny St. George and his ruddy cross; nor shall the authority of Thomas the Rhymer, or any other prophet in Scotland, England, or Wales, be considered as an apology for such unbecoming predictions."

" I were loth to give offence at any time," said the minstrel, " much more to provoke you to anger, when I am in the very act of experiencing your hospitality. I trust, however, you will remember that I do not come your uninvited guest, and that

if I speak to you of future events I do so without having the least intention to add my endeavour to bring them to pass; for, God knows, it is many years since my sincere prayer has been for peace and happiness to all men, and particularly honour and happiness to the land of Bowmen, in which I was born, and which I am bound to remember in my prayers beyond all other nations in the world."

"It is well that you do so," said the archer; "for so you shall best maintain your bounden duty to the fair land of your birth, which is the richest that the sun shines upon. Something, however, I would know, if it suits with your pleasure to tell me, and that is, whether you find anything in these rude rhymes appearing to affect the safety of the Castle of Douglas, where we now are?—for, mark me, Sir Minstrel, I have observed that these mouldering parchments, when or by whomsoever composed, have so far a certain coincidence with the truth, that when such predictions which they contain are spread abroad in the country, and create rumours of plots, conspiracies, and bloody wars, they are very apt to cause the very mischances which they would be thought only to predict."

"It were not very cautious in me," said the minstrel, "to choose a prophecy for my theme, which had reference to any attack on this garrison; for in such case I should, according to your ideas, lay myself under suspicion of endeavouring to forward what no person could more heartily regret than myself."

"Take my word for it, good friend," said the archer, "that it shall not be thus with thee; for I neither will myself conceive ill of thee, nor

report thee to Sir John de Walton as meditating harm against him or his garrison — nor, to speak truth, would Sir John de Walton be willing to believe any one who did. He thinks highly, and no doubt deservedly, of thy good faith towards thy lady, and would conceive it unjust to suspect the fidelity of one who has given evidence of his willingness to meet death rather than betray the least secret of his mistress."

"In preserving her secret," said Bertram, "I only discharged the duty of a faithful servant, leaving it to her to judge how long such a secret ought to be preserved; for a faithful servant ought to think as little of the issue towards himself of the commission which he bears, as the band of flock silk concerns itself with the secret of the letter which it secures. And, touching your question — I have no objections, although merely to satisfy your curiosity, to unfold to you that these old prophecies do contain some intimations of wars befalling in Douglas Dale, between an haggard, or wild hawk, which I take to be the cognisance of Sir John de Walton, and the three stars, or martlets, which is the cognisance of the Douglas; and more particulars I could tell of these onslaughts, did I know whereabouts is a place in these woods termed Bloody Sykes, the scene also, as I comprehend, of slaughter and death, between the followers of the three stars and those who hold the part of the Saxon, or King of England."

"Such a place," replied Gilbert Greenleaf, "I have heard often mentioned by that name among the natives of these parts; nevertheless it is in vain to seek to discover the precise spot, as these wily Scots conceal from us with care everything

respecting the geography of their country, as it is called by learned men; but we may here mention the Bloody Sykes, Bottomless Myre, and other places, as portentous names, to which their traditions attach some signification of war and slaughter. If it suits your wish, however, we can, on our way to the church, try to find this place called Bloody Sykes, which I doubt not we shall trace out long before the traitors who meditate an attack upon us will find a power sufficient for the attempt."

Accordingly the minstrel and archer, the latter of whom was by this time reasonably well refreshed with wine, marched out of the Castle of Douglas, without waiting for others of the garrison, resolving to seek the dingle bearing the ominous name of Bloody Sykes, concerning which the archer only knew that by mere accident he had heard of a place bearing such a name, at the hunting-match made under the auspices of Sir John de Walton, and knew that it lay in the woods somewhere near the town of Douglas, and in the vicinage of the castle.

CHAPTER XIX.

Hotspur. I cannot choose; sometimes he angers me
With telling me of the moldwarp and the ant,
Of the dreamer Merlin, and his prophecies;
And of a dragon and a finless fish,
A clipt-wing'd griffin and a moulten raven,
A couching lion, and a ramping cat,
And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff,
As puts me from my faith.

King Henry IV.

THE conversation between the minstrel and the ancient archer naturally pursued a train somewhat resembling that of Hotspur and Glendower, in which Gilbert Greenleaf by degrees took a larger share than was apparently consistent with his habits and education: but the truth was, that as he exerted himself to recall the recognisances of military chieftains, their war-cries, emblems, and other types by which they distinguished themselves in battle, and might undoubtedly be indicated in prophetic rhymes, he began to experience the pleasure which most men entertain when they find themselves unexpectedly possessed of a faculty which the moment calls upon them to employ, and renders them important in the possession of. The minstrel's sound good sense was certainly somewhat surprised at the inconsistencies sometimes displayed by his companion, as he was carried off by the willingness to make show of his newly discovered faculty on the one hand, and, on the other, to call to mind the prejudices which he had nour-

ished during his whole life against minstrels, who, with the whole train of legends and fables, were the more likely to be false, as being generally derived from the "North Countrie."

As they strolled from one glade of the forest to another, the minstrel began to be surprised at the number of Scottish votaries whom they met, and who seemed to be hastening to the church, and, as it appeared by the boughs which they carried, to assist in the ceremony of the day. To each of these the archer put a question respecting the existence of a place called Bloody Sykes, and where it was to be found; but all seemed either to be ignorant on the subject, or desirous of evading it, for which they found some pretext in the jolly archer's manner of interrogation, which savoured a good deal of the genial breakfast. The general answer was, that they knew no such place, or had other matters to attend to upon the morn of a holy-tide than answering frivolous questions. At last, when, in one or two instances, the answer of the Scottish almost approached to sullenness, the minstrel remarked it, observing that there was ever some mischief on foot when the people of this country could not find a civil answer to their betters, which is usually so ready among them, and that they appeared to be making a strong muster for the service of Palm Sunday.

"You will doubtless, Sir Archer," continued the minstrel, "make your report to your knight accordingly; for I promise you, that if you do not, I myself, whose lady's freedom is also concerned, will feel it my duty to place before Sir John de Walton the circumstances which make me entertain suspicion of this extraordinary confluence of

Scottish men, and the surliness which has replaced their wonted courtesy of manners."

"Tush, Sir Minstrel," replied the archer, displeased at Bertram's interference, "believe me, that armies have ere now depended on my report to the general, which has always been perspicuous and clear, according to the duties of war. Your walk, my worthy friend, has been in a separate department, such as affairs of peace, old songs, prophecies, and the like, in which it is far from my thoughts to contend with you; but credit me, it will be most for the reputation of both, that we do not attempt to interfere with what concerns each other."

"It is far from my wish to do so," replied the minstrel; "but I would wish that a speedy return should be made to the castle, in order to ask Sir John de Walton's opinion of that which we have but just seen."

"To this," replied Greenleaf, "there can be no objection; but, would you seek the governor at the hour which now is, you will find him most readily by going to the church of Douglas, to which he regularly wends on occasions such as the present, with the principal part of his officers, to insure, by his presence, that no tumult arise (of which there is no little dread) between the English and the Scottish. Let us therefore hold to our original intention of attending the service of the day, and we shall rid ourselves of these entangled woods, and gain the shortest road to the church of Douglas."

"Let us go, then, with all despatch," said the minstrel; "and with the greater haste, that it appears to me that something has passed on this very

spot this morning, which argues that the Christian peace due to the day has not been inviolably observed. What mean these drops of blood?" — alluding to those which had flowed from the wounds of Turnbull. "Wherefore is the earth impressed with these deep dints, the footsteps of armed men advancing and retreating, doubtless, according to the chances of a fierce and heady conflict?"

"By Our Lady," returned Greenleaf, "I must own that thou seest clear. What were my eyes made of when they permitted thee to be the first discoverer of these signs of conflict? Here are feathers of a blue plume, which I ought to remember, seeing my knight assumed it, or at least permitted me to place it in his helmet, this morning, in sign of returning hope, from the liveliness of its colour. But here it lies, shorn from his head, and, if I may guess, by no friendly hand. Come, friend, to the church — to the church — and thou shalt have my example of the manner in which De Walton ought to be supported when in danger."

He led the way through the town of Douglas, entering at the southern gate, and up the very street in which Sir Aymer de Valence had charged the Phantom Knight.

We can now say more fully, that the church of Douglas had originally been a stately Gothic building, whose towers, arising high above the walls of the town, bore witness to the grandeur of its original construction. It was now partly ruinous, and the small portion of open space which was retained for public worship was fitted up in the family aisle, where its deceased lords rested

from worldly labours and the strife of war. From the open ground in the front of the building, their eye could pursue a considerable part of the course of the river Douglas, which approached the town from the south-west, bordered by a line of hills fantastically diversified in their appearance, and in many places covered with copsewood, which descended towards the valley, and formed a part of the tangled and intricate woodland by which the town was surrounded. The river itself, sweeping round the west side of the town, and from thence northward, supplied that large inundation or artificial piece of water which we have already mentioned. Several of the Scottish people, bearing willow branches, or those of yew, to represent the palms which were the symbol of the day, seemed wandering in the churchyard as if to attend the approach of some person of peculiar sanctity, or procession of monks and friars, come to render the homage due to the solemnity. At the moment almost that Bertram and his companion entered the churchyard, the Lady of Berkely, who was in the act of following Sir John de Walton into the church, after having witnessed his conflict with the young Knight of Douglas, caught a glimpse of her faithful minstrel, and instantly determined to regain the company of that old servant of her house and confidant of her fortunes, and trust to the chance afterwards of being rejoined by Sir John de Walton, with a sufficient party to provide for her safety, which she in no respect doubted it would be his care to collect. She darted away accordingly from the path in which she was advancing, and reached the place where Bertram, with his new acquaintance Greenleaf, were making

some inquiries of the soldiers of the English garrison, whom the service of the day had brought there.

Lady Augusta Berkely, in the meantime, had an opportunity to say privately to her faithful attendant and guide, "Take no notice of me, friend Bertram, but take heed, if possible, that we be not again separated from each other." Having given him this hint, she observed that it was adopted by the minstrel, and that he presently afterwards looked round and set his eye upon her, as, muffled in her pilgrim's cloak, she slowly withdrew to another part of the cemetery, and seemed to halt, until, detaching himself from Greenleaf, he should find an opportunity of joining her.

Nothing, in truth, could have more sensibly affected the faithful minstrel than the singular mode of communication which acquainted him that his mistress was safe, and at liberty to choose her own motions, and, as he might hope, disposed to extricate herself from the dangers which surrounded her in Scotland, by an immediate retreat to her own country and domain. He would gladly have approached and joined her, but she took an opportunity by a sign to caution him against doing so, while at the same time he remained somewhat apprehensive of the consequences of bringing her under the notice of his new friend, Greenleaf, who might perhaps think it proper to busy himself so as to gain some favour with the knight who was at the head of the garrison. Meantime the old archer continued his conversation with Bertram, while the minstrel, like many other men similarly situated, heartily wished that his well-meaning companion had been a hundred fathoms under

ground, so his evanishment had given him licence to join his mistress; but all he had in his power was to approach her as near as he could, without creating any suspicion.

"I would pray you, worthy minstrel," said Greenleaf, after looking carefully round, "that we may prosecute together the theme which we were agitating before we came hither. Is it not your opinion that the Scottish natives have fixed this very morning for some of those dangerous attempts which they have repeatedly made, and which are so carefully guarded against by the governors placed in this district of Douglas by our good King Edward, our rightful sovereign?"

"I cannot see," replied the minstrel, "on what grounds you found such an apprehension, or what you see here in the churchyard different from that you talked of as we approached it, when you held me rather in scorn for giving way to some suspicions of the same kind."

"Do you not see," added the archer, "the numbers of men, with strange faces, and in various disguisements, who are thronging about these ancient ruins, which are usually so solitary? Yonder, for example, sits a boy, who seems to shun observation, and whose dress, I will be sworn, has never been shaped in Scotland."

"And if he is an English pilgrim," replied the minstrel, observing that the archer pointed towards the Lady of Berkely, "he surely affords less matter of suspicion."

"I know not that," said old Greenleaf, "but I think it will be my duty to inform Sir John de Walton, if I can reach him, that there are many persons here who in outward appearance neither

belong to the garrison nor to this part of the country."

"Consider," said Bertram, "before you harass with accusation a poor young man, and subject him to the consequences which must necessarily attend upon suspicions of this nature, how many circumstances call forth men peculiarly to devotion at this period. Not only is this the time of the triumphal entrance of the founder of the Christian religion into Jerusalem, but the day itself is called Dominica Confitentium, or the Sunday of Confessors, and the palm-tree, or the box and yew, which are used as its substitutes, and which are distributed to the priests, are burnt solemnly to ashes, and those ashes distributed among the pious, by the priests, upon the Ash-Wednesday of the succeeding year, all which rites and ceremonies in our country are observed, by order of the Christian Church; nor ought you, gentle archer, nor can you without a crime, persecute those as guilty of designs upon your garrison, who can ascribe their presence here to their desire to discharge the duties of the day; and look ye at yon numerous procession approaching with banner and cross, and, as it appears, consisting of some Churchman of rank, and his attendants; let us first inquire who he is, and it is probable we shall find in his name and rank sufficient security for the peaceable and orderly behaviour of those whom piety has this day assembled at the church of Douglas."

Greenleaf accordingly made the investigation recommended by his companion, and received information that the holy man who headed the procession was no other than the diocesan of the district, the Bishop of Glasgow, who had come to

give his countenance to the rites with which the day was to be sanctified.

The prelate accordingly entered the walls of the dilapidated churchyard, preceded by his cross-bearers, and attended by numbers, with boughs of yew and other evergreens, used on the festivity instead of palms. Among them the holy father showered his blessing, accompanied by signs of the cross, which were met with devout exclamations by such of the worshippers as crowded around him: "To thee, reverend father, we apply for pardon for our offences, which we humbly desire to confess to thee, in order that we may obtain pardon from heaven."

In this manner the congregation and the dignified clergyman met together, exchanging pious greeting, and seemingly intent upon nothing but the rites of the day. The acclamations of the congregation mingled with the deep voice of the officiating priest, dispensing the sacred ritual; the whole forming a scene which, conducted with the Catholic skill and ceremonial, was at once imposing and affecting.

The archer, on seeing the zeal with which the people in the churchyard, as well as a number who issued from the church, hastened proudly to salute the bishop of the diocese, was rather ashamed of the suspicions which he had entertained of the sincerity of the good man's purpose in coming hither. Taking advantage of a fit of devotion, not perhaps very common with old Greenleaf, who at this moment thrust himself forward to share in those spiritual advantages which the prelate was dispensing, Bertram slipped clear of his English friend, and, gliding to the side of the Lady

Augusta, exchanged, by the pressure of the hand, a mutual congratulation upon having rejoined company. On a sign by the minstrel, they withdrew to the inside of the church, so as to remain unobserved amidst the crowd, in which they were favoured by the dark shadows of some parts of the building.

The body of the church, broken as it was, and hung round with the armorial trophies of the last Lords of Douglas, furnished rather the appearance of a sacrilegiously desecrated ruin, than the inside of a holy place; yet some care appeared to have been taken to prepare it for the service of the day. At the lower end hung the great escutcheon of William Lord of Douglas, who had lately died a prisoner in England; around that escutcheon were placed the smaller shields of his sixteen ancestors, and a deep black shadow was diffused by the whole mass, unless where relieved by the glance of the coronets, or the glimmer of bearings particularly gay in emblazonry. I need not say that in other respects the interior of the church was much dismantled, it being the very same place in which Sir Aymer de Valence held an interview with the old sexton; and who now, drawing into a separate corner some of the straggling parties whom he had collected and brought to the church, kept on the alert, and appeared ready for an attack as well at midday as at the witching hour of midnight. This was the more necessary, as the eye of Sir John de Walton seemed busied in searching from one place to another, as if unable to find the object he was in quest of, which the reader will easily understand to be the Lady Augusta de Berkely, of whom he had lost sight in the pressure of the multitude

At the eastern part of the church was fitted up a temporary altar, by the side of which, arrayed in his robes, the Bishop of Glasgow had taken his place, with such priests and attendants as composed his episcopal retinue. His suite was neither numerous nor richly attired, nor did his own appearance present a splendid specimen of the wealth and dignity of the episcopal order. When he laid down, however, his golden cross, at the stern command of the King of England, that of simple wood, which he assumed instead thereof, did not possess less authority, nor command less awe among the clergy and people of the diocese.

The various persons, natives of Scotland, now gathered around, seemed to watch his motions, as those of a descended saint, and the English waited in mute astonishment, apprehensive that at some unexpected signal an attack would be made upon them, either by the powers of earth or heaven, or perhaps by both in combination. The truth is, that so great was the devotion of the Scottish clergy of the higher ranks to the interests of the party of Bruce, that the English had become jealous of permitting them to interfere even with those ceremonies of the Church which were placed under their proper management, and thence the presence of the Bishop of Glasgow, officiating at a high festival in the church of Douglas, was a circumstance of rare occurrence, and not unattended both with wonder and suspicion. A council of the Church, however, had lately called the distinguished prelates of Scotland to the discharge of their duty on the festivity of Palm Sunday, and neither English nor Scottish saw the ceremony with indifference. An unwonted silence which

prevailed in the church, filled, as it appeared, with persons of different views, hopes, wishes, and expectations, resembled one of those solemn pauses which often take place before a strife of the elements, and are well understood to be the forerunners of some dreadful concussion of nature. All animals, according to their various nature, express their sense of the approaching tempest; the cattle, the deer, and other inhabitants of the walks of the forest, withdraw to the inmost recesses of their pastures; the sheep crowd into their fold; and the dull stupor of universal nature, whether animate or inanimate, presages its speedily awaking into general convulsion and disturbance, when the lurid lightning shall hiss at command of the diapason of the thunder.

It was thus that, in deep suspense, those who had come to the church in arms at the summons of Douglas, awaited and expected every moment a signal to attack; while the soldiers of the English garrison, aware of the evil disposition of the natives towards them, were reckoning every moment when the well-known shout of "Bows and bills!" should give signal for a general conflict, and both parties, gazing fiercely upon each other, seemed to expect the fatal onset.

Notwithstanding the tempest, which appeared every moment ready to burst, the Bishop of Glasgow proceeded with the utmost solemnity to perform the ceremonies proper to the day; he paused from time to time to survey the throng, as if to calculate whether the turbulent passions of those around him would be so long kept under as to admit of his duties being brought to a close in a manner becoming the time and place.

The prelate had just concluded the service, when a person advanced towards him with a solemn and mournful aspect, and asked if the reverend father could devote a few moments to administer comfort to a dying man who was lying wounded close by.

The Churchman signified a ready acquiescence, amidst a stillness which, when he surveyed the lowering brows of one party at least of those who were in the church, boded no peaceable termination to this fated day. The father motioned to the messenger to show him the way, and proceeded on his mission, attended by some of those who were understood to be followers of the Douglas.

There was something peculiarly striking, if not suspicious, in the interview which followed. In a subterranean vault was deposited the person of a large tall man, whose blood flowed copiously through two or three ghastly wounds, and streamed amongst the trusses of straw on which he lay; while his features exhibited a mixture of sternness and ferocity, which seemed prompt to kindle into a still more savage expression.

The reader will probably conjecture that the person in question was no other than Michael Turnbull, who, wounded in the rencounter of the morning, had been left by some of his friends upon the straw, which was arranged for him by way of couch, to live or die as he best could. The prelate, on entering the vault, lost no time in calling the attention of the wounded man to the state of his spiritual affairs, and assisting him to such comfort as the doctrine of the Church directed should be administered to departing sinners. The words exchanged between them were of that grave and severe character which passes between the

ghostly father and his pupil, when one world is rolling away from the view of the sinner, and another is displaying itself in all its terrors, and thundering in the ear of the penitent that retribution which the deeds done in the flesh must needs prepare him to expect. This is one of the most solemn meetings which can take place between earthly beings; and the courageous character of the Jedwood forester, as well as the benevolent and pious expression of the old Churchman, considerably enhanced the pathos of the scene.

"Turnbull," said the Churchman, "I trust you will believe me when I say, that it grieves my heart to see thee brought to this situation by wounds which, it is my duty to tell you, you must consider mortal."

"Is the chase ended, then?" said the Jedwood man with a sigh. "I care not, good father, for I think I have borne me as becomes a gallant quarry, and that the old forest has lost no credit by me, whether in pursuit or in bringing to bay; and even in this last matter, methinks this gay English knight would not have come off with such advantage, had the ground on which we stood been alike indifferent to both, or had I been aware of his onset; but it will be seen, by any one who takes the trouble to examine, that poor Michael Turnbull's foot slipped twice in the *mêlée*, otherwise it had not been his fate to be lying here in the dead-thraw;[1] while yonder Southron would probably have died like a dog, upon this bloody straw, in his place."

The bishop replied, advising his penitent to turn from vindictive thoughts respecting the death

[1] Or death agony.

of others, and endeavour to fix his attention upon his own departure from existence, which seemed shortly about to take place.

"Nay," replied the wounded man, "you, father, undoubtedly know best what is fit for me to do; yet methinks it would not be very well with me, if I had prolonged to this time of day the task of revising my life, and I am not the man to deny that mine has been a bloody and a desperate one. But you will grant me I never bore malice to a brave enemy for having done me an injury, and show me the man, being a Scotchman born, and having a natural love for his own country, who hath not, in these times, rather preferred a steel cap to a hat and feather, or who hath not been more conversant with drawn blades than with prayer-book; and you yourself know, father, whether, in our proceedings against the English interest, we have not uniformly had the countenance of the sincere fathers of the Scottish Church, and whether we have not been exhorted to take arms and make use of them for the honour of the King of Scotland, and the defence of our own rights."

"Undoubtedly," said the prelate, "such have been our exhortations towards our oppressed countrymen, nor do I now teach you a different doctrine; nevertheless, having now blood around me, and a dying man before me, I have need to pray that I have not been misled from the true path, and thus become the means of misdirecting others. May Heaven forgive me if I have done so, since I have only to plead my sincere and honest intention in excuse for the erroneous counsel which I may have given to you and others touching these

wars. I am conscious that, encouraging you so to stain your swords in blood, I have departed in some degree from the character of my profession, which enjoins that we neither shed blood nor are the occasion of its being shed. May Heaven enable us to obey our duties, and to repent of our errors, especially such as have occasioned the death or distress of our fellow-creatures! And, above all, may this dying Christian become aware of his errors, and repent with sincerity of having done to others that which he would not willingly have suffered at their hand!"

"For that matter," answered Turnbull, "the time has never been when I would not exchange a blow with the best man who ever lived; and if I was not in constant practice of the sword, it was because I have been brought up to the use of the Jedwood-axe, which the English call a partisan, and which makes little difference, I understand, from the sword and poniard."

"The distinction is not great," said the bishop; "but I fear, my friend, that life taken with what you call a Jedwood-axe, gives you no privilege over him who commits the same deed, and inflicts the same injury, with any other weapon."

"Nay, worthy father," said the penitent, "I must own that the effect of the weapons is the same, as far as concerns the man who suffers; but I would pray of you information, why a Jedwood man ought not to use, as is the custom of his country, a Jedwood-axe, being, as is implied in the name, the offensive weapon proper to his country?"

"The crime of murder," said the bishop, "consists not in the weapon with which the crime is

inflicted, but in the pain which the murderer inflicts upon his fellow-creature, and the breach of good order which he introduces into Heaven's lovely and peaceable creation; and it is by turning your repentance upon this crime that you may fairly expect to propitiate Heaven for your offences, and at the same time to escape the consequences which are denounced in Holy Writ against those by whom man's blood shall be shed."

"But, good father," said the wounded man, "you know as well as any one, that in this company, and in this very church, there are upon the watch scores of both Scotchmen and Englishmen, who come here not so much to discharge the religious duties of the day, as literally to bereave each other of their lives, and give a new example of the horror of those feuds which the two extremities of Britain nourish against each other. What conduct, then, is a poor man like me to hold? Am I not to raise this hand against the English, which methinks I still can make a tolerably efficient one — or am I, for the first time in my life, to hear the war-cry when it is raised, and hold back my sword from the slaughter? Methinks it will be difficult, perhaps altogether impossible, for me to do so; but if such is the pleasure of Heaven, and your advice, most reverend father, unquestionably I must do my best to be governed by your directions, as of one who has a right and title to direct us in every dilemma, or case, as they term it, of troubled conscience."

"Unquestionably," said the bishop, "it is my duty, as I have already said, to give no occasion this day for the shedding of blood, or the breach of peace; and I must charge you, as my penitent,

that upon your soul's safety, you do not minister any occasion to affray or bloodshed, either by maintaining such in your own person, or inciting others to the same; for by following a different course of advice, I am certain that you, as well as myself, would act sinfully and out of character."

"So I will endeavour to think, reverend father," answered the huntsman; "nevertheless, I hope it will be remembered in my favour that I am the first person bearing the surname of Turnbull, together with the proper name of the Prince of Archangels himself, who has at any time been able to sustain the affront occasioned by the presence of a Southron with a drawn sword, and was not thereby provoked to pluck forth his own weapon, and to lay about him."

"Take care, my son," returned the Prelate of Glasgow, "and observe, that even now thou art departing from those resolutions which, but a few minutes since, thou didst adopt upon serious and just consideration; wherefore do not be, O my son! like the sow that has wallowed in the mire, and, having been washed, repeats its act of pollution, and becomes again yet fouler than it was before."

"Well, reverend father," replied the wounded man, "although it seems almost unnatural for Scottish men and English to meet and part without a buffet, yet I will endeavour most faithfully not to minister any occasion of strife, nor, if possible, to snatch at any such occasion as shall be ministered to me."

"In doing so," returned the bishop, "thou wilt best atone for the injury which thou hast done to the law of Heaven upon former occasions, and thou

shalt prevent the causes for strife betwixt thee and thy brethren of the southern land, and shalt eschew the temptation towards that blood-guiltiness which is so rife in this our day and generation. And do not think that I am imposing upon thee, by these admonitions, a duty more difficult than it is in thy covenant to bear, as a man and as a Christian. I myself am a man, and a Scotchman, and, as such, I feel offended at the unjust conduct of the English towards our country and sovereign; and thinking as you do yourself, I know what you must suffer when you are obliged to submit to national insults, unretaliated and unrevenged. But let us not conceive ourselves the agents of that retributive vengeance which Heaven has, in a peculiar degree, declared to be its own attribute. Let us, while we see and feel the injuries inflicted on our own country, not forget that our own raids, ambuscades, and surprisals have been at least equally fatal to the English as their attacks and forays have been to us; and, in short, let the mutual injuries of the crosses of St. Andrew and of St. George be no longer considered as hostile to the inhabitants of the opposite district, at least during the festivals of religion; but as they are mutually signs of redemption, let them be, in like manner, intimations of forbearance and peace on both sides."

"I am contented," answered Turnbull, "to abstain from all offences towards others, and shall even endeavour to keep myself from resenting those of others towards me, in the hope of bringing to pass such a quiet and godly state of things as your words, reverend father, induce me to expect." Turning his face to the wall, the Borderer lay in

stern expectation of approaching death, which the bishop left him to contemplate.

The peaceful disposition which the prelate had inspired into Michael Turnbull had in some degree diffused itself among those present, who heard with awe the spiritual admonition to suspend the national antipathy, and remain in truce and amity with each other. Heaven had, however, decreed that the national quarrel, in which so much blood had been sacrificed, should that day again be the occasion of deadly strife.

A loud flourish of trumpets, seeming to proceed from beneath the earth, now rang through the church, and roused the attention of the soldiers and worshippers then assembled. Most of those who heard these warlike sounds betook themselves to their weapons, as if they considered it useless to wait any longer for the signal of conflict. Hoarse voices, rude exclamations, the rattle of swords against their sheaths, or their clashing against other pieces of armour, gave an awful presage of an onset, which, however, was for a time averted by the exhortations of the bishop. A second flourish of trumpets having taken place, the voice of a herald made proclamation to the following purpose: —

"That whereas there were many noble pursuivants of chivalry presently assembled in the Kirk of Douglas, and whereas there existed among them the usual causes of quarrel and points of debate for their advancement in chivalry, therefore the Scottish knights were ready to fight any number of the English who might be agreed, either upon the superior beauty of their ladies, or upon the national quarrel in any of its branches, or upon

whatsoever point might be at issue between them, which should be deemed satisfactory ground of quarrel by both; and the knights who should chance to be worsted in such dispute should renounce the prosecution thereof, or the bearing arms therein thereafter, with such other conditions to ensue upon their defeat as might be agreed upon by a council of the knights present at the Kirk of Douglas aforesaid. But foremost of all, any number of Scottish knights, from one to twenty, will defend the quarrel which has already drawn blood, touching the freedom of Lady Augusta de Berkely, and the rendition of Douglas Castle to the owner here present. Wherefore it is required that the English knights do intimate their consent that such trial of valour take place, which, according to the rules of chivalry, they cannot refuse, without losing utterly the reputation of valour, and incurring the diminution of such other degree of estimation as a courageous pursuivant of arms would willingly be held in, both by the good knights of his own country, and those of others."

This unexpected gage of battle realised the worst fears of those who had looked with suspicion on the extraordinary assemblage this day of the dependants of the House of Douglas. After a short pause, the trumpets again flourished lustily, when the reply of the English knights was made in the following terms:—

"That God forbid the rights and privileges of England's knights, and the beauty of her damsels, should not be asserted by her children, or that such English knights as were here assembled should show the least backwardness to accept the combat offered, whether grounded upon the supe-

rior beauty of their ladies, or whether upon the causes of dispute between the countries, for either or all of which the knights of England here present were willing to do battle in the terms of the indenture aforesaid, while sword and lance shall endure. Saving and excepting the surrender of the Castle of Douglas, which can be rendered to no one but England's king, or those acting under his orders."

CHAPTER XX.

Cry the wild war-note, let the champions pass,
Do bravely each, and God defend the right;
Upon Saint Andrew thrice can they thus cry,
And thrice they shout on height,
And then marked them on the Englishmen,
As I have told you right.
Saint George the bright, our ladies' knight,
To name they were full fain;
Our Englishmen they cried on height,
And thrice they shout again.

Old Ballad.

The extraordinary crisis mentioned in the preceding chapter was the cause, as may be supposed, of the leaders on both sides now throwing aside all concealment, and displaying their utmost strength, by marshalling their respective adherents. The renowned Knight of Douglas, with Sir Malcolm Fleming and other distinguished cavaliers, were seen in close consultation.

Sir John de Walton, startled by the first flourish of trumpets, while anxiously endeavouring to secure a retreat for the Lady Augusta, was in a moment seen collecting his followers, in which he was assisted by the active friendship of the Knight of Valence.

The Lady of Berkely showed no craven spirit at these warlike preparations; she advanced, closely followed by the faithful Bertram, and a female in a riding-hood, whose face, though carefully concealed, was no other than that of the unfortunate

Margaret de Hautlieu, whose worst fears had been realised as to the faithlessness of her betrothed knight.

A pause ensued, which for some time no one present thought himself of authority sufficient to break.

At last the Knight of Douglas stepped forward and said, loudly, "I wait to know whether Sir John de Walton requests leave of James of Douglas to evacuate his castle without further wasting that daylight which might show us to judge a fair field, and whether he craves Douglas's protection in doing so?"

The Knight of Walton drew his sword. "I hold the Castle of Douglas," he said, "in spite of all deadly, — and never will I ask the protection from any one which my own sword is competent to afford me!"

"I stand by you, Sir John," said Aymer de Valence, "as your true comrade, against whatever odds may oppose themselves to us."

"Courage, noble English," said the voice of Greenleaf; "take your weapons, in God's name. Bows and bills! bows and bills! — A messenger brings us notice that Pembroke is in full march hither from the borders of Ayrshire, and will be with us in half an hour. Fight on, gallant English! Valence to the rescue! and long life to the gallant Earl of Pembroke!"

Those English within and around the church no longer delayed to take arms, and De Walton, crying out at the height of his voice, "I implore the Douglas to look nearly to the safety of the ladies," fought his way to the church door; the Scottish finding themselves unable to resist the im-

pression of terror which affected them at the sight of this renowned knight, seconded by his brother-in-arms, both of whom had been so long the terror of the district. In the meantime, it is possible that De Walton might altogether have forced his way out of the church, had he not been met boldly by the young son of Thomas Dickson of Hazelside, while his father was receiving from Douglas the charge of preserving the stranger ladies from all harm from the fight, which, so long suspended, was now on the point of taking place.

De Walton cast his eye upon the Lady Augusta, with a desire of rushing to the rescue, but was forced to conclude that he provided best for her safety by leaving her under the protection of Douglas's honour.

Young Dickson, in the meantime, heaped blow on blow, seconding with all his juvenile courage every effort he could make, in order to attain the prize due to the conqueror of the renowned De Walton.

"Silly boy," at length said Sir John, who had for some time forborne the stripling, "take, then, thy death from a noble hand, since thou preferrest that to peace and length of days."

"I care not," said the Scottish youth, with his dying breath; "I have lived long enough, since I have kept you so long in the place where you now stand."

And the youth said truly, for as he fell, never again to rise, the Douglas stood in his place, and, without a word spoken, again engaged with De Walton in the same formidable single combat by which they had already been distinguished, but with even additional fury. Aymer de Valence

drew up to his friend De Walton's left hand, and seemed but to desire the apology of one of Douglas's people attempting to second him, to join in the fray; but as he saw no person who seemed disposed to give him such opportunity, he repressed the inclination, and remained an unwilling spectator. At length it seemed as if Fleming, who stood foremost among the Scottish knights, was desirous to measure his sword with De Valence. Aymer himself, burning with the desire of combat, at last called out, "Faithless Knight of Boghall! step forth and defend yourself against the imputation of having deserted your lady love, and of being a mansworn disgrace to the rolls of chivalry!"

"My answer," said Fleming, "even to a less gross taunt, hangs by my side." In an instant his sword was in his hand, and even the practised warriors who looked on felt difficulty in discovering the progress of the strife, which rather resembled a thunder-storm in a mountainous country than the stroke and parry of two swords, offending on the one side, and keeping the defensive on the other.

Their blows were exchanged with surprising rapidity; and although the two combatants did not equal Douglas and De Walton in maintaining a certain degree of reserve, founded upon a respect which these knights mutually entertained for each other, yet the want of art was supplied by a degree of fury which gave chance at least an equal share in the issue.

Seeing their superiors thus desperately engaged, the partisans, as they were accustomed, stood still on either side, and looked on with the reverence which they instinctively paid to their commanders

and leaders in arms. One or two of the women were in the meanwhile attracted, according to the nature of the sex, by compassion for those who had already experienced the casualties of war. Young Dickson, breathing his last among the feet of the combatants,[1] was in some sort rescued from the tumult by the Lady of Berkely, in whom the action seemed less strange, owing to the pilgrim's dress which she still retained, and who in vain endeavoured to solicit the attention of the boy's father to the task in which she was engaged.

"Cumber yourself not, lady, about that which is bootless," said old Dickson, "and distract not your own attention and mine from preserving you, whom it is the Douglas's wish to rescue, and whom, so please God and St. Bride, I consider as placed by my chieftain under my charge. Believe me, this youth's death is in no way forgotten, though this be not the time to remember it. A time will come for recollection, and an hour for revenge."

[1] [The fall of this brave stripling by the hand of the English governor, and the stern heroism of the father in turning from the spot where he lay, "a model of beauty and strength," that he might not be withdrawn from the duty which Douglas had assigned him of protecting the Lady of Berkely, excites an interest for both, with which it is almost to be regretted that history interferes. It was the old man, Thomas Dickson, not his son, who fell. The *slogan*, "A Douglas, a Douglas!" having been prematurely raised, Dickson, who was within the church, thinking that his young Lord with his armed band was at hand, drew his sword, and, with only one man to assist him, opposed the English, who now rushed to the door. Cut across the middle by an English sword, he still continued his opposition, till he fell lifeless at the threshold. Such is the tradition, and it is supported by a memorial of some authority — a tombstone, still to be seen in the churchyard of Douglas, on which is sculptured a figure of Dickson, supporting with his left arm his protruding entrails, and raising his sword with the other in the attitude of combat.]— *Note by the Rev. Mr. Stewart of Douglas.*

So said the stern old man, reverting his eyes from the bloody corpse which lay at his feet, a model of beauty and strength. Having taken one more anxious look, he turned round, and placed himself where he could best protect the Lady of Berkely, not again turning his eyes on his son's body.

In the interim the combat continued, without the least cessation on either side, and without a decided advantage. At length, however, fate seemed disposed to interfere; the Knight of Fleming, pushing fiercely forward, and brought by chance almost close to the person of the Lady Margaret de Hautlieu, missed his blow, and his foot sliding in the blood of the young victim, Dickson, he fell before his antagonist, and was in imminent danger of being at his mercy, when Margaret de Hautlieu, who inherited the soul of a warrior, and, besides, was a very strong as well as an undaunted person, seeing a mace of no great weight lying on the floor, where it had been dropped by the fallen Dickson, it, at the same instant, caught her eye, armed her hand, and intercepted, or struck down the sword of Sir Aymer de Valence, who would otherwise have remained the master of the day at that interesting moment. Fleming had more to do to avail himself of an unexpected chance of recovery than to make a commentary upon the manner in which it had been so singularly brought about; he instantly recovered the advantage he had lost, and was able in the ensuing close to trip up the feet of his antagonist, who fell on the pavement, while the voice of his conqueror, if he could properly be termed such, resounded through the church with the fatal

words, "Yield thee, Aymer de Valence — rescue or no rescue — yield thee! — yield thee!" he added, as he placed his sword to the throat of the fallen knight, "not to me, but to this noble lady — rescue or no rescue."

With a heavy heart the English knight perceived that he had fairly lost so favourable an opportunity of acquiring fame, and was obliged to submit to his destiny, or be slain upon the spot. There was only one consolation, that no battle was ever more honourably sustained, being gained as much by accident as by valour.

The fate of the protracted and desperate combat between Douglas and De Walton did not much longer remain in suspense; indeed, the number of conquests in single combat achieved by the Douglas in these wars was so great, as to make it doubtful whether he was not, in personal strength and skill, even a superior knight to Bruce himself, and he was at least acknowledged nearly his equal in the art of war.

So however it was, that when three quarters of an hour had passed in hard contest, Douglas and De Walton, whose nerves were not actually of iron, began to show some signs that their human bodies were feeling the effect of the dreadful exertion. Their blows began to be drawn more slowly, and were parried with less celerity. Douglas, seeing that the combat must soon come to an end, generously made a signal, intimating to his antagonist to hold his hand for an instant.

"Brave de Walton," he said, "there is no mortal quarrel between us, and you must be sensible that in this passage of arms, Douglas, though he is only worth his sword and his cloak, has abstained

from taking a decisive advantage when the chance of arms has more than once offered it. My father's house, the broad domains around it, the dwelling, and the graves of my ancestors, form a reasonable reward for a knight to fight for, and call upon me in an imperative voice to prosecute the strife which has such an object, while you are as welcome to the noble lady, in all honour and safety, as if you had received her from the hands of King Edward himself; and I give you my word, that the utmost honours which can attend a prisoner, and a careful absence of everything like injury or insult, shall attend De Walton when he yields up the castle, as well as his sword, to James of Douglas."

"It is the fate to which I am perhaps doomed," replied Sir John de Walton; "but never will I voluntarily embrace it, and never shall it be said that my own tongue, saving in the last extremity, pronounced upon me the fatal sentence to sink the point of my own sword. Pembroke is upon the march with his whole army, to rescue the garrison of Douglas. I hear the tramp of his horses' feet even now, and I will maintain my ground while I am within reach of support; nor do I fear that the breath which now begins to fail will not last long enough to uphold the struggle till the arrival of the expected succour. Come on, then, and treat me not as a child, but as one who, whether I stand or fall, fears not to encounter the utmost force of my knightly antagonist."

"So be it then," said Douglas, a darksome hue, like the lurid colour of the thunder-cloud, changing his brow as he spoke, intimating that he meditated a speedy end to the contest, when, just as

the noise of horses' feet drew nigh, a Welsh knight, known as such by the diminutive size of his steed, his naked limbs, and his bloody spear, called out loudly to the combatants to hold their hands.

"Is Pembroke near?" said De Walton.

"No nearer than Loudon Hill," said the Prestantin; "but I bring his commands to John de Walton."

"I stand ready to obey them through every danger," answered the knight.

"Woe is me," said the Welshman, "that my mouth should bring to the ears of so brave a man tidings so unwelcome! The Earl of Pembroke yesterday received information that the Castle of Douglas was attacked by the son of the deceased Earl, and the whole inhabitants of the district. Pembroke, on hearing this, resolved to march to your support, noble knight, with all the forces he had at his disposal. He did so, and accordingly entertained every assurance of relieving the castle, when unexpectedly he met, on Loudon Hill, a body of men of no very inferior force to his own, and having at their head that famous Bruce whom the Scottish rebels acknowledge as their king. He marched instantly to the attack, swearing he would not even draw a comb through his grey beard until he had rid England of this recurring plague. But the fate of war was against us."

He stopped here for lack of breath.

"I thought so!" exclaimed Douglas. "Robert Bruce will now sleep at night, since he has paid home Pembroke for the slaughter of his friends and the dispersion of his army at Methuen Wood. His men are, indeed, accustomed to meet with

dangers, and to conquer them: those who follow him have been trained under Wallace, besides being partakers of the perils of Bruce himself. It was thought that the waves had swallowed them when they shipped themselves from the west; but know, that the Bruce was determined with the present reviving spring to awaken his pretensions, and that he retires not from Scotland again while he lives, and while a single lord remains to set his foot by his sovereign, in spite of all the power which has been so feloniously employed against him."

"It is even too true," said the Welshman Meredith, "although it is said by a proud Scotchman. — The Earl of Pembroke, completely defeated, is unable to stir from Ayr, towards which he has retreated with great loss; and he sends his instructions to Sir John de Walton, to make the best terms he can for the surrender of the Castle of Douglas, and trust nothing to his support."

The Scottish, who heard this unexpected news, joined in a shout so loud and energetic, that the ruins of the ancient church seemed actually to rock, and threaten to fall on the heads of those who were crowded within it.

The brow of De Walton was overclouded at the news of Pembroke's defeat, although in some respects it placed him at liberty to take measures for the safety of the Lady of Berkely. He could not, however, claim the same honourable terms which had been offered to him by Douglas before the news of the battle of Loudon Hill had arrived.

"Noble knight," he said, "it is entirely at your pleasure to dictate the terms of surrender of your paternal castle; nor have I a right to claim from

you those conditions which, a little while since, your generosity put in my offer. But I submit to my fate; and upon whatever terms you think fit to grant me, I must be content to offer to surrender to you the weapon, of which I now put the point in the earth, in evidence that I will never more direct it against you until a fair ransom shall place it once more at my own disposal."

"God forbid," answered the noble James of Douglas, "that I should take such advantage of the bravest knight out of not a few who have found me work in battle! I will take example from the Knight of Fleming, who has gallantly bestowed his captive in guerdon upon a noble damsel here present; and in like manner I transfer my claim upon the person of the redoubted Knight of Walton, to the high and noble Lady Augusta Berkely, who, I hope, will not scorn to accept from the Douglas a gift which the chance of war has thrown into his hands."

Sir John de Walton, on hearing this unexpected decision, looked up like the traveller who discovers the beams of the sun breaking through and dispersing the tempest which has accompanied him for a whole morning. The Lady of Berkely recollected wnat became her rank, and showed her sense of the Douglas's chivalry. Hastily wiping off the tears which had unwillingly flowed to her eyes, while her lover's safety and her own were resting on the precarious issue of a desperate combat, she assumed the look proper to a heroine of that age, who did not feel averse to accept the importance which was conceded to her by the general voice of the chivalry of the period. Stepping forward, bearing her person gracefully yet modestly,

in the attitude of a lady accustomed to be looked to in difficulties like the present, she addressed the audience in a tone which might not have misbecome the Goddess of Battle dispersing her influence at the close of a field covered with the dead and the dying.

"The noble Douglas," she said, "shall not pass without a prize from the field which he has so nobly won. This rich string of brilliants, which my ancestor won from the Sultan of Trebizond, itself a prize of battle, will be honoured by sustaining, under the Douglas's armour, a lock of hair of the fortunate lady whom the victorious lord has adopted for his guide in chivalry; and if the Douglas, till he shall adorn it with that lock, will permit the honoured lock of hair which it now bears to retain its station, she on whose head it grew will hold it as a signal that poor Augusta de Berkely is pardoned for having gaged any mortal man in strife with the Knight of Douglas."

"Woman's love," replied the Douglas, "shall not divorce this locket from my bosom, which I will keep till the last day of my life, as emblematic of female worth and female virtue. And, not to encroach upon the valued and honoured province of Sir John de Walton, be it known to all men, that whoever shall say that the Lady Augusta of Berkely has, in this entangled matter, acted otherwise than becomes the noblest of her sex, he will do well to be ready to maintain such a proposition with his lance, against James of Douglas, in a fair field."

This speech was heard with approbation on all sides; and the news brought by Meredith of the defeat of the Earl of Pembroke, and his subsequent

retreat, reconciled the fiercest of the English soldiers to the surrender of Douglas Castle. The necessary conditions were speedily agreed on, which put the Scottish in possession of this stronghold, together with the stores, both of arms and ammunition, of every kind, which it contained. The garrison had it to boast that they obtained a free passage, with their horses and arms, to return by the shortest and safest route to the marches of England, without either suffering or inflicting damage.

Margaret of Hautlieu was not behind in acting a generous part: the gallant Knight of Valence was allowed to accompany his friend De Walton and the Lady Augusta to England, and without ransom.

The venerable prelate of Glasgow, seeing what appeared at one time likely to end in a general conflict, terminate so auspiciously for his country, contented himself with bestowing his blessing on the assembled multitude, and retiring with those who came to assist in the service of the day.

This surrender of Douglas Castle upon the Palm Sunday of the 19th of March, 1306–7, was the beginning of a career of conquest which was uninterrupted, in which the greater part of the strengths and fortresses of Scotland were yielded to those who asserted the liberty of their country, until the crowning mercy was gained in the celebrated field of Bannockburn, where the English sustained a defeat more disastrous than is mentioned upon any other occasion in their annals.

Little need be said of the fate of the persons of this story. King Edward was greatly enraged at Sir John de Walton for having surrendered the

Castle of Douglas, securing at the same time his own object, the envied hand of the heiress of Berkely. The knights to whom he referred the matter as a subject of inquiry gave it, nevertheless, as their opinion that De Walton was void of all censure, having discharged his duty in its fullest extent, till the commands of his superior officer obliged him to surrender the Dangerous Castle.

A singular renewal of intercourse took place, many months afterwards, between Margaret of Hautlieu and her lover, Sir Malcolm Fleming. The use which the lady made of her freedom, and of the doom of the Scottish Parliament, which put her in possession of her father's inheritance, was to follow her adventurous spirit through dangers not usually encountered by those of her sex; and the Lady of Hautlieu was not only a daring follower of the chase, but it was said that she was even not daunted in the battle-field. She remained faithful to the political principles which she had adopted at an early period; and it seemed as if she had formed the gallant resolution of shaking the god Cupid from her horse's mane, if not treading him beneath her horse's feet.

The Fleming, although he had vanished from the neighbourhood of the counties of Lanark and Ayr, made an attempt to state his apology to the Lady de Hautlieu herself, who returned his letter unopened, and remained to all appearance resolved never again to enter upon the topic of their original engagement. It chanced, however, at a later period of the war with England, while Fleming was one night travelling upon the Border, after the ordinary fashion of one who sought adventures, a waiting-maid, equipped in a fantastic habit, asked

the protection of his arm in the name of her lady, who, late in the evening, had been made captive, she said, by certain ill-disposed caitiffs, who were carrying her by force through the forest. The Fleming's lance was, of course, in its rest, and woe betide the faitour whose lot it was to encounter its thrust; the first fell, incapable of further combat, and another of the felons encountered the same fate with little more resistance. The lady, released from the discourteous cord which restrained her liberty, did not hesitate to join company with the brave knight by whom she had been rescued; and although the darkness did not permit her to recognise her old lover in her liberator, yet she could not but lend a willing ear to the conversation with which he entertained her, as they proceeded on the way. He spoke of the fallen caitiffs as being Englishmen, who found a pleasure in exercising oppression and barbarities upon the wandering damsels of Scotland, and whose cause, therefore, the champions of that country were bound to avenge while the blood throbbed in their veins. He spoke of the injustice of the national quarrel which had afforded a pretence for such deliberate oppression; and the lady, who herself had suffered so much by the interference of the English in the affairs of Scotland, readily acquiesced in the sentiments which he expressed on a subject which she had so much reason for regarding as an afflicting one. Her answer was given in the spirit of a person who would not hesitate, if the times should call for such an example, to defend even with her hand the rights which she asserted with her tongue.

Pleased with the sentiments which she expressed,

and recognising in her voice that secret charm which, once impressed upon the human heart, is rarely wrought out of the remembrance by a long train of subsequent events, he almost persuaded himself that the tones were familiar to him, and had at one time formed the key to his innermost affections. In proceeding on their journey, the knight's troubled state of mind was augmented instead of being diminished. The scenes of his earliest youth were recalled by circumstances so slight, as would in ordinary cases have produced no effect whatsoever; the sentiments appeared similar to those which his life had been devoted to enforce, and he half persuaded himself that the dawn of day was to be to him the beginning of a fortune equally singular and extraordinary.

In the midst of this anxiety, Sir Malcolm Fleming had no anticipation that the lady whom he had heretofore rejected was again thrown into his path, after years of absence; still less, when daylight gave him a partial view of his fair companion's countenance, was he prepared to believe that he was once again to term himself the champion of Margaret de Hautlieu; but it was so. The lady, on that direful morning when she retired from the church of Douglas, had not resolved (indeed, what lady ever did?) to renounce, without some struggle, the beauties which she had once possessed. A long process of time, employed under skilful hands, had succeeded in obliterating the scars which remained as the marks of her fall. These were now considerably effaced, and the lost organ of sight no longer appeared so great a blemish, concealed, as it was, by a black ribbon, and the arts of the tirewoman, who made it her busi-

ness to shadow it over by a lock of hair. In a word, he saw the same Margaret de Hautlieu, with no very different style of expression from that which her face, partaking of the high and passionate character of her soul, had always presented. It seemed to both, therefore, that their fate, by bringing them together after a separation which appeared so decisive, had intimated its *fiat* that their fortunes were inseparable from each other. By the time that the summer sun had climbed high in the heavens, the two travellers rode apart from their retinue, conversing together with an eagerness which marked the important matters in discussion between them; and in a short time it was made generally known through Scotland, that Sir Malcolm Fleming and the Lady Margaret de Hautlieu were to be united at the court of the good King Robert, and the husband invested with the honours of Biggar and Cumbernauld, an earldom so long known in the family of Fleming.

THE gentle reader is acquainted that these are, in all probability, the last tales which it will be the lot of the Author to submit to the public. He is now on the eve of visiting foreign parts; a ship of war is commissioned by its Royal Master to carry the Author of Waverley to climates in which he may possibly obtain such a restoration of health as may serve him to spin his thread to an end in his own country. Had he continued to prosecute his usual literary labours, it seems indeed probable that, at the term of years he has already attained, the bowl, to use the pathetic language of Scripture, would have been broken at the fountain; and little can one, who has enjoyed on the whole an uncom-

mon share of the most inestimable of worldly blessings, be entitled to complain that life, advancing to its period, should be attended with its usual proportions of shadows and storms. They have affected him at least in no more painful manner than is inseparable from the discharge of this part of the debt of humanity. Of those whose relation to him in the ranks of life might have insured him their sympathy under indisposition, many are now no more; and those who may yet follow in his wake are entitled to expect, in bearing inevitable evils, an example of firmness and patience, more especially on the part of one who has enjoyed no small good fortune during the course of his pilgrimage.

The public have claims on his gratitude, for which the Author of Waverley has no adequate means of expression; but he may be permitted to hope that the powers of his mind, such as they are, may not have a different date from those of his body; and that he may again meet his patronising friends, if not exactly in his old fashion of literature, at least in some branch which may not call forth the remark that —

Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage.

ABBOTSFORD, *September* 1831.

AUTHOR'S NOTES.

Note I. p. 90 — Scottish Wild Cattle.

These Bulls are thus described by Hector Boetius, concerning whom he says: "In this wood (namely, the Caledonian wood) were sometime white bulls, with crisp and curling manes, like fierce lions; and though they seemed meek and tame in the remanent figure of their bodies, they were more wild than any other beasts, and had such hatred against the society and company of men, that they never came in the woods nor lesuries where they found any foot or hand thereof, and many days after they eat not of the herbs that were touched or handled by man. These bulls were so wild, that they were never taken but by slight and crafty labour, and so impatient, that after they were taken they died from insupportable dolour. As soon as any man invaded these bulls, they rushed with such terrible press upon him that they struck him to the earth, taking no fear of hounds, sharp lances, or other most penetrative weapons." — Boetius, *Chron. Scot.* vol. i. p. xxxix.

The wild cattle of this breed, which are now only known in one manor in England, that of Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland (the seat of the Earl of Tankerville), were, in the memory of man, still preserved in three places in Scotland — namely, Drumlanrig, Cumbernauld, and the upper park at Hamilton Palace, at all of which places, except the last, I believe, they have now been destroyed, on account of their ferocity. But though those of modern days are remarkable for their white colour, with black muzzles, and exhibiting, in a small degree, the black mane, about three or four inches long, by which the bulls in particular are distinguished, they do not by any means come near the terrific description given us by the ancient authors, which has made some naturalists think that these animals should probably be referred to a different species, though possessing the same general habits, and

included in the same genus. The bones which are often discovered in Scottish mosses belong certainly to a race of animals much larger than those of Chillingham, which seldom grow to above 80 stone (of 14 lbs.), the general weight varying from 60 to 80 stone. We should be accounted very negligent by one class of readers, did we not record that the beef furnished by those cattle is of excellent flavour, and finely marbled.

[The following is an extract from a letter received by Sir Walter Scott, some time after the publication of the novel:—

"When it is wished to kill any of the cattle at Chillingham, the keeper goes into the herd on horseback, in which way they are quite accessible, and, singling out his victim, takes aim with a large rifle-gun, and seldom fails in bringing him down. If the poor animal makes much bellowing in his agony, and especially if the ground be stained with his blood, his companions become very furious, and are themselves, I believe, accessory to his death. After which, they fly off to a distant part of the park, and he is drawn away on a sledge. Lord Tankerville is very tenacious of these singular animals; he will on no account part with a living one, and hardly allows of a sufficient number being killed to leave pasturage for those that remain.

"It happened on one occasion, three or four years ago, that a party visiting at the castle, among whom were some *men of war*, who had hunted buffaloes in foreign parts, obtained permission to do the keeper's work and shoot one of the wild cattle. They sallied out on horseback, and, duly equipped for the enterprise, attacked their object. The poor animal received several wounds, but none of them proving fatal, he retired before his pursuers, roaring with pain and rage, till, planting himself against a wall or tree, he stood at bay, offering a front of defiance. In this position the youthful heir of the castle, Lord Ossulston, rode up to give him the fatal shot. Though warned of the danger of approaching near to the enraged animal, and especially of firing without first having turned his horse's head in a direction to be ready for flight, he discharged his piece; but ere he could turn his horse round to make his retreat, the raging beast had plunged his immense horns into its flank. The horse staggered and was near falling, but, recovering by a violent effort, he extricated himself from his infuriated pursuer, making off with all the speed his wasting strength supplied, his entrails meanwhile dragging on the ground; till at length he fell, and died at the same moment. The animal was now close upon his rear, and the young Lord would unquestionably have shared the fate of his unhappy steed, had not the keeper,

deeming it full time to conclude the *day's diversion*, fired at the instant. His shot brought the beast to the ground, and, running in with his large knife, he put a period to its existence.

"This scene of gentlemanly pastime was viewed from a turret of the castle by Lady Tankerville and her female visitors. Such a situation for the mother of the young hero was anything but enviable."]

Note II. p. 148. —Coleridge.

[The author has somewhat altered part of a beautiful unpublished fragment of Coleridge: —

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur Orellan, —
Where may the grave of that good knight be?
By the marge of a brook, on the slope of Helvellyn,
Under the boughs of a young birch-tree.
The oak that in Summer was pleasant to hear,
That rustled in Autumn all withered and sear,
That whistled and groaned thro' the Winter alone,
He hath gone, and a birch in his place is grown.
The knight's bones are dust,
His good sword is rust;
His spirit is with the saints, we trust.

Edit.]

EDITOR'S NOTES.

(*a*) p. 48. "The Archbishop of St. Andrews." This is an error. Lamberton, the Bishop in question, died long before St. Andrews was an Archbishopric. Lamberton had entered into a "band" with Bruce, with the sanction of a penalty of £10,000 in case of faithlessness. He swore fealty to Edward I. on the Holy Sacrament, on a piece of the True Cross, and in other ways, but broke all his oaths. He it was who sent the Douglas to join Bruce, lending him his horse. Perhaps he may have told the English, as in the novel, that Douglas robbed him. He was imprisoned by Edward I., but, under Edward II., again joined the Scottish King. Lamberton's own appointment as Bishop was made in face of English opposition.

(*b*) p. 58. "Thomas the Rhymer." All the learning about Thomas, ballads and romance, may be found in "The Border Minstrelsy." The shadowy deer which accompany his ghost are those which summoned him back to Fairyland. The movement of the book by an unseen hand is in the style of "psychical phenomena," familiar to ancient Egypt as well as to modern superstition. See Jamblichus, "De Mysteriis."

(*c*) p. 64. "The Dangerous Castle of Douglas." Lockhart says that Scott sat beside the ruined fragment of a tower, "drawing outlines on the turf, and arranging in his fancy the sweep of the old precincts. Before the subjacent and surrounding lake and morass were drained, the position must have been the perfect model of solitary strength."

(*d*) p. 65. "The Minstrel." This grave and learned, not to say philosophical, minstrel was very unlike the ribald *jongleurs*, whom the Church regarded as outcasts from salvation. An exception was made in favour of epic minstrels, like the author of the "Chanson de Roland." See Léon Gautier, "Épopées Françaises."

(*e*) p. 149. Blackhouse Tower. This keep is on the Douglas Burn, a tributary of the Yarrow, the scene of the ballad named "The Douglas Tragedy." The Douglases held Ettrick Forest long before the ancestors of the Buccleugh were more than Lairds of Branxholme, and the Douglas name is common in the district.

ANDREW LANG.

July 1894.

GLOSSARY.

Alcade, alcalde, a Spanish magistrate or judge.
Ambuscado, an ambush.
Assoilzie, to pardon, to acquit.
"A' thegither," all together.

Bedral, a sexton or beadle.
Blink, a glance of the eye.
Borrel, unlearned, simple.
Bourg, borough, town.
Buckle, the curl of a wig.

Cadgy, lively, frolicsome.
Carle, a fellow, a person.
Carline, an old woman.
Cartel, a challenge to single combat.
Close, a bout, a turn.
Corselet, a coat of armour.
Costume, custom.
Cousing, a cousin.
Cresset, a fixed candlestick, or small portable fire.
"Cull in the ken," a man or boy in the house.

Damosel, a damsel.
Dead-thraw, the death-agony.
Deil, the devil.
Demesne, the estate cultivated by a feudal lord himself.
Dirk, a short dagger or knife.
Dirking, stabbing with the dirk.
Dolour, a pining or fretting at captivity.
Donjon, the principal tower in a feudal castle.
Drink-geld, a tip, money.

Faitour, a traitor, a scoundrel.
Falset, falsehood.
Fashes, gives himself trouble or pains.
Fulmart, a polecat.

Gallooned, ornamented with galloon, a kind of thread lace used for binding.
Good-daughter, daughter-in-law.
Groat, an old English coin worth 4*d.*
Guide, to treat ill, to use ill.

Haggard, a wild hawk.
Haggis, the lights, liver, and heart of a sheep, mixed with oatmeal, beef suet, onions, &c., the whole boiled in a sheep's stomach-bag.
Hogg, a shilling.
"Horning and hooping," blowing of horns and shouting.

Kail, cabbage.
Kail-yard, a cabbage-plot or garden.
Kerne, a light-armed foot-soldier.
Kirtle, a gown, an outer petticoat.

Laick, lay.
Landlouper, a stroller, an adventurer.
Landward, the outlying rural districts.
Leal, loyal.
Lesuries, pastures.
Lippen, to trust to, to confide in.
Lobscouse, a hash of meat and vegetables; stewed biscuit and salt meat.

Lootie, a marauder, a plunderer.
Los, praise.
Louping, leaping.

Mainrent, vassalage.

"Na blate," uncivil, immodest, bold.
Nouz, intelligence and enterprise.

Oe, a grandchild.

Partisan, a kind of halbert or pike.
Peon, a foot-soldier.
Pibroch, an air on the bagpipes.
Picaresca, what is knavish, adventurous, and not over-honest.
Pickaninnies, small children.
Podagra, the gout.
Prestantin, one who receives military pay.

Raploch, coarse woollen, homespun.
Rationale, the reasons.
Rebeck, a stringed instrument, not unlike a violin in appearance.
Recheat, the huntsman's signal of recall from the hunt.
Reif, robbery.
Rokelay, a short cloak worn by women.
Rose-noble, an old gold coin, worth 6*s.* 8*d.*
Rote, a kind of harp or guitar, played by turning a handle.
"Rugs and reives," tears and carries off by violence.

Sack, a kind of dry wine.
Sasine, the legal instrument or document which testifies that so-and-so has been put in lawful possession of certain property.
Screeds, pieces torn off, shreds.
Seneschal, a steward.
Shaw, wild wood or forest.
Shieling, a hut.
"Sholto dhu Glass," see yon dark grey man.
Skaithless, unhurt, uninjured.
Slogan, the war-cry of a Highland clan.
Springald, a youth, an active young man.
Swivel, a small cannon fixed on a swivel.
Syllabub, a dish of wine with milk or cream, a sort of curd.

Tantivy, a fit of violence.
Tappiced, concealed, hidden.
Thane, an earl or noble.
Thirlage; used in regard to the mortgaging of property or rents.
Tinchel, a great drive of game, made by a wide ring of beaters.
Tineing, a loss.
Tint, lost.
Tope, a knoll or slight eminence.
Townfit, the foot (one end) of the town.
"Townhead to the townfit," from one end of the town to the other.
Toy, a headdress worn by old women of the lower classes.

Upsides, on an equal footing with.

Wight, strong and active.

Yule, Christmas-tide.

THE END.

TALES OF MY LANDLORD.

FOURTH AND LAST SERIES.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM,

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH-CLERK OF GANDERCLEUCH.

As I stood by yon roofless tower,
Where the wa'flower scents the dewy air,
Where the howlet mourns in her ivy bower,
And tells the midnight moon her care:
The winds were laid, the air was still,
The stars they shot along the sky;
The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant echoing glens reply.

ROBERT BURNS.

CHRONICLES

OF

THE CANONGATE.

FIRST SERIES.

Sic itur ad astra.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

TO

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

Concerning the "Chronicles of the Canongate," little need be added to the already copious introductory matter. Lady Scott died on May 14, 1826, when Sir Walter was in Edinburgh. His Journal shows how bitterly he felt the greatest loss that fate has in store for men. This is not a topic to be dealt upon here. On May 27 he writes: "It is time that I should be up and doing. . . . I must not fail myself and my family, and the necessity of exertion becomes apparent. I must try a *hors d'œuvre*, something that can go on between the necessary intervals of *Nap*. Mrs. Murray Keith's Tale of the Deserter, with her interview with the lad's mother, may be made most affecting, but will hardly endure expansion." He writes (May 28): "I intend the work as a kind of *olla podrida*, into which any species of narrative or discussion may be thrown."

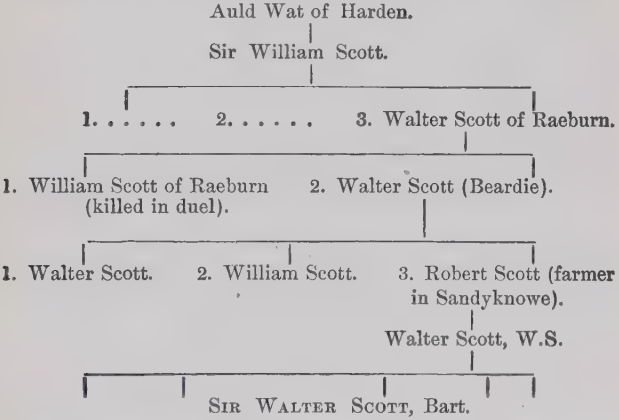
Thus the "Chronicles of the Canongate" were, in conception, something like Dickens's "Master Humphrey's Clock." That experiment was soon found to be unsuccessful, and it may be admitted that a set of brief tales in a framework (that old Oriental invention) did not suit the genius of Scott. He broke away into longer narrative in "The Surgeon's Daughter," and he passed to a regular novel, "The Fair Maid of Perth." About short stories, *contes*, much has been written critically in recent years. This kind of literary

form, which in all ages has been used with admirable skill in France, is not popular in England, either with authors or the public. In the last ten years more has been attempted in this way both in America and in England. Hawthorne and Poe, in an earlier generation, set good examples in their different manners. It is needless to mention here some recent English and Anglo-Indian successes — the tales of Mr. Kipling and of Mr. Louis Stevenson. In the England of Scott examples were rare indeed, and the specimens in this volume show no mastery of the form — that is, they are not among his masterpieces. His episodic tale of Wandering Willie, that faultless little romance, remains the best *conte* in our language, absolutely perfect, without a superfluous word. But it may be allowed that "The Highland Widow" "will not endure much expansion," and he has expanded it too much. He dilutes his tale, and loses his hold on our interest. Twenty pages might have sufficed for the story, in which there is too much description and discussion. "The Two Drovers" is a far better example, technically: a moving incident is briefly told in a masterly way. "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror" was not approved by Cadell, hence Scott sold it for £500 to a "Keepsake." "The Laird's Jock" is a mere anecdote, and pretends to no higher place. "The Tapestried Chamber" is a fair example of the conventional ghost story. Scott may have forgotten that it had been published before in "Blackwood's Magazine" for 1818. Modern psychologists would no doubt explain it by saying that the General had seen the portrait without noticing it, and that the vision arose from his "subliminal self."

As to the progress of the volume, we find Scott (June 28) writing: "Methinks I can make this work answer. . . . The weather is favourable for application, were it not that it makes the composer sleepy." The

book was published in November 1827. The introduction, as the Editor of Scott's Journal, Mr. Douglas, remarks, "contains sketches of his own life, with portraits of his friends, unsurpassed in any of his works." The "decent bien bodies," the Croftangries, were his kinsfolk, the Scotts of Raeburn.[1] In "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror" he remembers the trouble of his childhood, his lameness. "There is the stile at which I can recollect

[1] The Scotts of Raeburn were descended from the first Laird, Walter Scott. He was the grandson of Auld Wat of Harden.


Auld Wat of Harden.
Sir William Scott.
1. . . . . 2. . . . . 3. Walter Scott of Raeburn.
1. William Scott of Raeburn (killed in duel).
2. Walter Scott (Beardie).
1. Walter Scott.
2. William Scott.
3. Robert Scott (farmer in Sandyknowe).
Walter Scott, W.S.
Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

Thus Sir Walter was descended from a second son of Raeburn, and the first Raeburn was a third son of Harden. It was Sir William Scott of Harden, son of Auld Wat, who, according to the legend, had choice between the gibbet and Muckle-Mou'd Meg Murray of Elibank. This couple had a large family. A daughter married a Scott of Woll, and the Editor understands that a daughter of hers married a forbear of his own. "Most writers note a fault in the Scots; and Sabellicus touches this point; that the Scots are prone to call themselves of noble birth, and this I can support by a saying about the Scots that is common among the French, for they will say of such an one: 'That man's a cousin of the King of Scots' (*Is regis Scotorum cognatus germanus est*)." — John Major's "History of Greater Britain" (1520).

a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity, as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps, which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the suppressed bitterness of the moment." Unlike Byron, he *did* suppress the bitterness. His own thought of taking sanctuary from the pursuit of Abud, the Shylock of his misfortunes, also inspires the Introduction. As to the dinner at which Scott threw off the mask, the Editor may record that, in November 1892, he had the pleasure of meeting, at a dinner of the Pen and Pencil Club, a gentleman who was present at the famous festival in 1827.

It has been shown, in the Editor's Introduction to "The Fair Maid of Perth," that the short narratives were not received with much popular favour. The autobiographical pages have now a stronger interest, especially as Mrs. Bethune Baliol contains traits "of Scott's own beloved mother."[1] Mrs. Murray Keith, who supplied most of the materials, died in 1818, at the age of eighty-two.[2] The scene of Croftangry's paternal house is Carmichael, the mansion of the Hyndfords. The anecdote of the Mirror is derived from the belief in crystal gazing, a pastime which has lately been revived experimentally.[3] Modern performers do not employ the striking "properties" of the Italian magician, but are, if they may be credited, not less successful in seeing distant events.[4] It may be worth mentioning that Mr. Murray, the actor, who was prominent at the dinner where Scott proclaimed his authorship of the

[1] Lockhart, ix. 173.

[2] Scott to Terry, Lockhart, v. 310.

[3] See Society of Psychical Research, "Proceedings." p. 436, December 1892.

[4] Crystal balls may be procured from the Assistant Secretary, 19 Buckingham Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Scott would have been amused by this revival of the practices of Dr. Dee.

novels, was a descendant of Murray of Broughton, the treacherous secretary of Prince Charles.

It has been said that the tales here collected are not the best possible specimens of Scott's work. The modes of publication prevalent in his time did not lend themselves to *contes;* there was no space for them in newspapers, as in France, nor were there many monthly magazines, as now in England and America. Thus he had no temptation or opportunity to practise in this style, nor was terseness a characteristic of his genius. He liked plenty of room, and wrote with no distinct scheme of his tale before him. The author of short stories must know his purpose from the first, must select, reject, and concentrate. Scott needed, and was accustomed to, a wide field, a multitude of characters; thus, while he never surpassed "Wandering Willie," he cannot be said to have been quite at home in the briefer tales of the "Chronicles of the Canongate."

It is worth remembering that at this time (1826–27) Scott took up and revised a work which was only discovered after his death. This was his autobiographical fragment — the Ashestiel fragment, as Lockhart calls it, written in 1808, after the success of "Marmion." It was found in an old cabinet at Abbotsford, and Lockhart assigns the additions and notes to the date of the Chronicles. This is probably correct, for in the Fragment (Lockhart, i. 5) Scott talks of a duel between his great-granduncle, William Scott of Raeburn, and Pringle of Crichton, fought near Selkirk. The place of this fatal encounter was afterwards named "The Raeburn Meadow-spot." Now in Scott's correspondence of this period (1826–27) the Editor finds a letter from his grandfather, Mr. Andrew Lang, to Scott. Sir Walter has asked where the Raeburn Meadow-spot was, and Mr. Lang describes it, enclosing a little sketch or map. Apparently the field lay on the right-hand side

of the Old Road from Melrose, near the top of the hill on which Selkirk stands, and distant about half a mile from that town. If this letter fixes the date of revisal of the autobiography, we may regret that Sir Walter did not finish the work, which would have been more valuable, in all senses, than his later novels. But, as he was not disposed to publish his memoirs during his lifetime, and was most anxious to wip off his debts and be his own man, he abandoned the task, in favour of works fitted for immediate publication.

ANDREW LANG.

July 1894.

INTRODUCTION

TO

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

THE preceding volume of this Collection[1] concluded the last of the pieces originally published under the *nominis umbra* of The Author of Waverley; and the circumstances which rendered it impossible for the writer to continue longer in the possession of his *incognito* were communicated in 1827, in the Introduction to the first series of Chronicles of the Canongate — consisting (besides a biographical sketch of the imaginary chronicler) of three tales, entitled "The Highland Widow," "The Two Drovers," and "The Surgeon's Daughter." In the present volume the two first named of these pieces are included, together with three detached stories, which appeared the year after in the elegant compilation called "The Keepsake." The "Surgeon's Daughter" it is thought better to defer until a succeeding volume,[2] than to

Begin and break off in the middle.

I have, perhaps, said enough on former occasions of the misfortunes which led to the dropping of that mask under which I had, for a long series of years, enjoyed so large a portion of public favour. Through the success of those literary efforts I had been enabled to indulge

[1] [Namely, "Woodstock."]

[2] ["The Surgeon's Daughter" will be found in the 46th volume of this edition.]

most of the tastes which a retired person of my station might be supposed to entertain. In the pen of this nameless romancer I seemed to possess something like the secret fountain of coined gold and pearls vouchsafed to the traveller of the Eastern Tale ; and no doubt believed that I might venture, without silly imprudence, to extend my personal expenditure considerably beyond what I should have thought of, had my means been limited to the competence which I derived from inheritance, with the moderate income of a professional situation. I bought, and built, and planted, and was considered by myself, as by the rest of the world, in the safe possession of an easy fortune. My riches, however, like the other riches of this world, were liable to accidents, under which they were ultimately destined to make unto themselves wings and fly away. The year 1825, so disastrous to many branches of industry and commerce, did not spare the market of literature ; and the sudden ruin that fell on so many of the booksellers could scarcely have been expected to leave unscathed one whose career had of necessity connected him deeply and extensively with the pecuniary transactions of that profession. In a word, almost without one note of premonition, I found myself involved in the sweeping catastrophe of the unhappy time, and called on to meet the demands of creditors upon commercial establishments with which my fortunes had long been bound up, to the extent of no less a sum than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

The author having, however rashly, committed his pledges thus largely to the hazards of trading companies, it behoved him, of course, to abide the consequences of his conduct, and, with whatever feelings, he surrendered on the instant every shred of property which he had been accustomed to call his own. It became vested in the hands of gentlemen, whose integrity, prudence, and

intelligence were combined with all possible liberality and kindness of disposition, and who readily afforded every assistance towards the execution of plans in the success of which the author contemplated the possibility of his ultimate extrication, and which were of such a nature that, had assistance of this sort been withheld, he could have had little prospect of carrying them into effect. Among other resources which occurred was the project of that complete and corrected edition of his Novels and Romances (whose real parentage had of necessity been disclosed at the moment of the commercial convulsions alluded to) which has now advanced with unprecedented favour nearly to its close; but as he purposed also to continue, for the behoof of those to whom he was indebted, the exercise of his pen in the same path of literature, so long as the taste of his countrymen should seem to approve of his efforts, it appeared to him that it would have been an idle piece of affectation to attempt getting up a new *incognito*, after his original visor had been thus dashed from his brow. Hence the personal narrative prefixed to the first work of fiction which he put forth after the paternity of the "Waverley Novels" had come to be publicly ascertained: and though many of the particulars originally avowed in that Notice have been unavoidably adverted to in the prefaces and notes to some of the preceding volumes of the present collection, it is now reprinted as it stood at the time, because some interest is generally attached to a coin or medal struck on a special occasion, as expressing, perhaps, more faithfully than the same artist could have afterwards conveyed, the feelings of the moment that gave it birth. The Introduction to the first series of Chronicles of the Canongate ran, then, in these words: —

INTRODUCTION.

All who are acquainted with the early history of the Italian stage are aware that Arlecchino is not, in his original conception, a mere worker of marvels with his wooden sword, a jumper in and out of windows, as upon our theatre, but, as his particoloured jacket implies, a buffoon or clown, whose mouth, far from being eternally closed, as amongst us, is filled, like that of Touchstone, with quips, and cranks, and witty devices, very often delivered extempore. It is not easy to trace how he became possessed of his black vizard, which was anciently made in the resemblance of the face of a cat; but it seems that the mask was essential to the performance of the character, as will appear from the following theatrical anecdote:—

An actor on the Italian stage permitted at the Foire du St. Germain, in Paris, was renowned for the wild, venturous, and extravagant wit, the brilliant sallies and fortunate repartees, with which he prodigally seasoned the character of the particoloured jester. Some critics, whose good-will towards a favorite performer was stronger than their judgment, took occasion to remonstrate with the successful actor on the subject of the grotesque vizard. They went wilily to their purpose, observing that his classical and attic wit, his delicate vein of humour, his happy turn for dialogue, were rendered burlesque and ludicrous by this unmeaning and bizarre disguise, and that those attributes would become far more impressive, if aided by the spirit of his eye and the expression of his natural features. The actor's vanity was easily so far engaged

as to induce him to make the experiment. He played Harlequin barefaced, but was considered on all hands as having made a total failure. He had lost the audacity which a sense of incognito bestowed, and with it all the reckless play of raillery which gave vivacity to his original acting. He cursed his advisers, and resumed his grotesque vizard; but, it is said, without ever being able to regain the careless and successful levity which the consciousness of the disguise had formerly bestowed.

Perhaps the Author of Waverley is now about to incur a risk of the same kind, and endanger his popularity by having laid aside his incognito. It is certainly not a voluntary experiment, like that of Harlequin; for it was my original intention never to have avowed these works during my lifetime, and the original manuscripts were carefully preserved (though by the care of others rather than mine), with the purpose of supplying the necessary evidence of the truth when the period of announcing it should arrive.[1] But the affairs of my publishers having unfortunately passed into a management different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter; and thus my mask, like my Aunt Dinah's in "Tristram Shandy," having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from my face, which was now become likely.

Yet I had not the slightest intention of selecting the time and place in which the disclosure was finally

[1] These manuscripts are at present (August 1831) advertised for public sale, which is an addition, though a small one, to other annoyances. (*a*) *

* See Editor's Notes at the end of the Volume. Wherever a similar reference occurs, the reader will understand that the same direction applies.

made; nor was there any concert betwixt my learned and respected friend Lord MEADOWBANK and myself upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23rd of February last, at a public meeting, called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place. Just before we sat down to table, Lord Meadowbank[1] asked me privately whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the Waverley Novels? I did not immediately see the purpose of his lordship's question, although I certainly might have been led to infer it, and replied that the secret had now of necessity become known to so many people that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadowbank was thus induced, while doing me the great honour of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something on the subject of these Novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that by remaining silent I must have stood convicted, either of the actual paternity, or of the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly and unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had only time to recollect that I had been guided thither by a most friendly hand, and could not, perhaps, find a better public opportunity to lay down a disguise which began to resemble that of a detected masquerader.

I had therefore the task of avowing myself to the numerous and respectable company assembled as the sole and unaided author of these Novels of Waverley, the paternity of which was likely at one time to have formed a controversy of some celebrity, for the ingenuity with which some instructors of the public gave

[1] One of the Supreme Judges of Scotland, termed Lords of Council and Session.

their assurance on the subject was extremely persevering. I now think it further necessary to say that, while I take on myself all the merits and demerits attending these compositions, I am bound to acknowledge with gratitude hints of subjects and legends which I have received from various quarters, and have occasionally used as a foundation of my fictitious compositions, or woven up with them in the shape of episodes. I am bound, in particular, to acknowledge the unremitting kindness of Mr. Joseph Train, supervisor of excise at Dumfries, to whose unwearied industry I have been indebted for many curious traditions and points of antiquarian interest. It was Mr. Train who brought to my recollection the history of Old Mortality, although I myself had had a personal interview with that celebrated wanderer so far back as about 1792, when I found him on his usual task. He was then engaged in repairing the gravestones of the Covenanters who had died while imprisoned in the Castle of Dunnottar, to which many of them were committed prisoners at the period of Argyle's rising; their place of confinement is still called the Whigs' Vault. Mr. Train, however, procured for me far more extensive information concerning this singular person, whose name was Patterson, than I had been able to acquire during my own short conversation with him.[1] He was (as I think I have somewhere already stated) a native of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire, and it is believed that domestic affliction, as well as devotional feeling, induced him to commence the wandering mode of life which he pursued for a very long period. It is more than twenty years since Robert Patterson's death, which took place on the high-road near Lockerbie, where he was found exhausted and expiring. The white pony

[1] See, for some further particulars, the notes to "Old Mortality" [vols. ix and x.] in the present collective edition.

the companion of his pilgrimage, was standing by the side of its dying master; the whole furnishing a scene not unfitted for the pencil. These particulars I had from Mr. Train.

Another debt, which I pay most willingly, I owe to an unknown correspondent (a lady),[1] who favoured me with the history of the upright and high-principled female whom in "The Heart of Mid-Lothian" I have termed Jeanie Deans. The circumstance of her refusing to save her sister's life by an act of perjury, and undertaking a pilgrimage to London to obtain her pardon, are both represented as true by my fair and obliging correspondent; and they led me to consider the possibility of rendering a fictitious personage interesting by mere dignity of mind and rectitude of principle, assisted by unpretending good sense and temper, without any of the beauty, grace, talent, accomplishment, and wit to which a heroine of romance is supposed to have a prescriptive right. If the portrait was received with interest by the public, I am conscious how much it was owing to the truth and force of the original sketch, which I regret that I am unable to present to the public, as it was written with much feeling and spirit.

Old and odd books, and a considerable collection of family legends, formed another quarry, so ample that it was much more likely that the strength of the labourer should be exhausted than that materials should fail. I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of "The Bride of Lammermoor" actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. The female relative, by whom the melancholy tale was communicated to me many years since, was a near connection of the family in which the event happened, and always told it with an appearance of melancholy mystery which enhanced the interest. She had known, in her youth, the brother

[1] The late Mrs. Goldie.

who rode before the unhappy victim to the fatal altar, who, though then a mere boy, and occupied almost entirely with the gaiety of his own appearance in the bridal procession, could not but remark that the hand of his sister was moist, and cold as that of a statue. It is unnecessary further to withdraw the veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say that the events alone are imitated; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story.

Indeed, I may here state generally, that, although I have deemed historical personages free subjects of delineation, I have never on any occasion violated the respect due to private life. It was indeed impossible that traits proper to persons, both living and dead, with whom I have had intercourse in society, should not have risen to my pen in such works as "Waverley," and those which followed it. But I have always studied to generalise the portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals. Yet I must own my attempts have not in this last particular been uniformly successful. There are men whose characters are so peculiarly marked that the delineation of some leading and principal feature inevitably places the whole person before you in his individuality. Thus, the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, in "The Antiquary," was partly founded on that of an old friend of my youth, to whom I am indebted for introducing me to Shakspeare, and other invaluable favours; but I thought I had so completely disguised the likeness that his features could not be recognised by any one now

alive. I was mistaken, however, and indeed had endangered what I desired should be considered as a secret; for I afterwards learned that a highly respectable gentleman, one of the few surviving friends of my father,[1] and an acute critic, had said, upon the appearance of the work, that he was now convinced who was the author of it, as he recognised, in the Antiquary of Monkbarns, traces of the character of a very intimate friend of my father's family.

I may here also notice, that the sort of exchange of gallantry which is represented as taking place betwixt the Baron of Bradwardine and Colonel Talbot is a literal fact. The real circumstances of the anecdote, alike honourable to Whig and Tory, are these:—

Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle (*b*)—a name which I cannot write without the warmest recollections of gratitude to the friend of my childhood, who first introduced me to the Highlands, their traditions, and their manners—had been engaged actively in the troubles of 1745. As he charged at the battle of Preston with his clan, the Stewarts of Appine, he saw an officer of the opposite army standing alone by a battery of four cannon, of which he discharged three on the advancing Highlanders, and then drew his sword. Invernahyle rushed on him, and required him to surrender. "Never to rebels!" was the undaunted reply, accompanied with a lounge, which the Highlander received on his target; but instead of using his sword in cutting down his now defenceless antagonist, he employed it in parrying the blow of a Lochaber axe, aimed at the officer by the miller, one of his own followers, a grim-looking old Highlander, whom I remember to have seen. Thus overpowered, Lieutenant-Colonel Allan Whitefoord, a

[1] James Chalmers, Esq., solicitor-at-law, London, who died during the publication of the present edition of these Novels (August 1831).

gentleman of rank and consequence, as well as a brave officer, gave up his sword, and with it his purse and watch, which Invernahyle accepted, to save them from his followers. After the affair was over, Mr. Stewart sought out his prisoner, and they were introduced to each other by the celebrated John Roy Stewart, who acquainted Colonel Whitefoord with the quality of his captor, and made him aware of the necessity of receiving back his property, which he was inclined to leave in the hands into which it had fallen. So great became the confidence established betwixt them, that Invernahyle obtained from the Chevalier his prisoner's freedom upon parole ; and soon afterwards, having been sent back to the Highlands to raise men, he visited Colonel Whitefoord at his own house, and spent two happy days with him and his Whig friends, without thinking, on either side, of the civil war which was then raging.

When the battle of Culloden put an end to the hopes of Charles Edward, Invernahyle, wounded and unable to move, was borne from the field by the faithful zeal of his retainers. But, as he had been a distinguished Jacobite, his family and property were exposed to the system of vindictive destruction too generally carried into execution through the country of the insurgents. It was now Colonel Whitefoord's turn to exert himself, and he wearied all the authorities, civil and military, with his solicitations for pardon to the saver of his life, or at least for a protection for his wife and family. His applications were for a long time unsuccessful : "I was found with the mark of the Beast upon me in every list," was Invernahyle's expression. At length Colonel Whitefoord applied to the Duke of Cumberland, and urged his suit with every argument which he could think of. Being still repulsed, he took his commission from his bosom, and, having said something of his own and his family's exertions in the cause of the House of

Hanover, begged to resign his situation in their service, since he could not be permitted to show his gratitude to the person to whom he owed his life. The duke, struck with his earnestness, desired him to take up his commission, and granted the protection required for the family of Invernahyle.

The chieftain himself lay concealed in a cave near his own house, before which a small body of regular soldiers were encamped. He could hear their muster-roll called every morning, and their drums beat to quarters at night, and not a change of the sentinels escaped him. As it was suspected that he was lurking somewhere on the property, his family were closely watched, and compelled to use the utmost precaution in supplying him with food. One of his daughters, a child of eight or ten years old, was employed as the agent least likely to be suspected. She was an instance, among others, that a time of danger and difficulty creates a premature sharpness of intellect. She made herself acquainted among the soldiers, till she became so familiar to them that her motions escaped their notice ; and her practice was, to stroll away into the neighbourhood of the cave, and leave what slender supply of food she carried for that purpose under some remarkable stone, or the root of some tree, where her father might find it as he crept by night from his lurking-place. Times became milder, and my excellent friend was relieved from proscription by the Act of Indemnity. Such is the interesting story which I have rather injured than improved, by the manner in which it is told in "Waverley."

This incident, with several other circumstances illustrating the Tales in question, was communicated by me to my late lamented friend, William Erskine (*c*) (a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinedder), who afterwards reviewed with far too much partiality the Tales of my Landlord, for the "Quarterly Review" of

January 1817.[1] In the same article are contained other illustrations of the Novels, with which I supplied my accomplished friend, who took the trouble to write the review. The reader who is desirous of such information will find the original of Meg Merrilies, and I believe of one or two other personages of the same cast of character, in the article referred to.

I may also mention, that the tragic and savage circumstances which are represented as preceding the birth of Allan MacAuley, in "A Legend of Montrose," really happened in the family of Stewart of Ardvoirlich. The wager about the candlesticks, whose place was supplied by Highland torch-bearers, was laid and won by one of the MacDonalds of Keppoch.

There can be but little amusement in winnowing out the few grains of truth which are contained in this mass of empty fiction. I may, however, before dismissing the subject, allude to the various localities which have been affixed to some of the scenery introduced into these Novels, by which, for example, Wolf's Hope is identified with Fast Castle in Berwickshire, — Tillietudlem with Draphane in Clydesdale, — and the valley in "The Monastery," called Glendearg, with the dale of the river Allan, above Lord Somerville's villa, near Melrose. I can only say, that in these and other instances I had no purpose of describing any particular local spot, and the resemblance must therefore be of that general kind which necessarily exists between scenes of the same character. The iron-bound coast of Scotland affords upon its headlands and promontories fifty such castles as Wolf's Hope; every county has a valley more or less resembling Glendearg; and if castles like Tillietudlem, or mansions like the Baron of Bradwardine's, are now less frequently to be met with, it is owing to the rage of indiscriminate

[1] Lord Kinedder died in August 1822. Eheu! (August 1831.)

destruction, which has removed or ruined so many monuments of antiquity, when they were not protected by their inaccessible situation.[1]

The scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters in these Novels are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British Poets to discover apposite mottoes, and, in the situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could, and, when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to. In some cases I have been entertained when Dr. Watts and other graver authors have been ransacked in vain for stanzas for which the novelist alone was responsible.

And now the reader may expect me, while in the confessional, to explain the motives why I have so long persisted in disclaiming the works of which I am now writing. To this it would be difficult to give any other reply, save that of Corporal Nym — It was the author's humour or caprice for the time. I hope it will not be construed into ingratitude to the public, to whose indulgence I have owed my *sang froid* much more than to any merit of my own, if I confess that I am, and have been, more indifferent to success, or to failure, as an author, than may be the case with others, who feel more strongly the passion for literary fame, probably

[1] I would particularly intimate the Kaim of Urie, on the eastern coast of Scotland, as having suggested an idea for the tower called Wolf's Crag, which the public more generally identified with the ancient tower of Fast Castle.

because they are justly conscious of a better title to it. It was not until I had attained the age of thirty years that I made any serious attempt at distinguishing myself as an author; and at that period, men's hopes, desires, and wishes have usually acquired something of a decisive character, and are not eagerly and easily diverted into a new channel. When I made the discovery — for to me it was one — that by amusing myself with composition, which I felt a delightful occupation, I could also give pleasure to others, and became aware that literary pursuits were likely to engage in future a considerable portion of my time, I felt some alarm that I might acquire those habits of jealousy and fretfulness which have lessened, and even degraded, the character even of great authors, and rendered them, by their petty squabbles and mutual irritability, the laughing-stock of the people of the world. I resolved, therefore, in this respect to guard my breast, perhaps an unfriendly critic may add, my brow, with triple brass,[1] and as much as possible to avoid resting my thoughts and wishes upon literary success, lest I should endanger my own peace of mind and tranquillity by literary failure. It would argue either stupid apathy or ridiculous affectation to say that I have been insensible to the public applause, when I have been honoured with its testimonies; and still more highly do I prize the invaluable friendships which some temporary popularity has enabled me to form among those of my contemporaries most distinguished by talents and genius, and which I venture to hope now rest upon a basis more firm than the circumstances which gave rise to them. Yet feeling all these advantages as a man ought to do, and must do, I may say, with truth and confidence, that I have, I think, tasted of the intoxi-

[1] Not altogether impossible, when it is considered that I have been at the bar since 1792! (August 1831.)

cating cup with moderation, and that I have never, either in conversation or correspondence, encouraged discussions respecting my own literary pursuits. On the contrary, I have usually found such topics, even when introduced from motives most flattering to myself, rather embarrassing and disagreeable.

I have now frankly told my motives for concealment, so far as I am conscious of having any, and the public will forgive the egotism of the detail, as what is necessarily connected with it. The author, so long and loudly called for, has appeared on the stage, and made his obeisance to the audience. Thus far his conduct is a mark of respect. To linger in their presence would be intrusion.

I have only to repeat, that I avow myself in print, as formerly in words, the sole and unassisted author of all the Novels published as works of the "Author of Waverley." I do this without shame, for I am unconscious that there is anything in their composition which deserves reproach, either on the score of religion or morality; and without any feeling of exultation, because, whatever may have been their temporary success, I am well aware how much their reputation depends upon the caprice of fashion; and I have already mentioned the precarious tenure by which it is held, as a reason for displaying no great avidity in grasping at the possession.

I ought to mention, before concluding, that twenty persons, at least, were, either from intimacy or from the confidence which circumstances rendered necessary, participant of this secret; and as there was no instance, to my knowledge, of any one of the number breaking faith, I am the more obliged to them, because the slight and trivial character of the mystery was not qualified to inspire much respect in those intrusted with it. Nevertheless, like Jack the Giant-Killer, I

was fully confident in the advantage of my "Coat of Darkness," and had it not been from compulsory circumstances, I would have indeed been very cautious how I parted with it.

As for the work which follows, it was meditated, and in part printed, long before the avowal of the novels took place, and originally commenced with a declaration that it was neither to have introduction nor preface of any kind. This long proem, prefixed to a work intended not to have any, may, however, serve to show how human purposes, in the most trifling as well as the most important affairs, are liable to be controlled by the course of events. Thus, we begin to cross a strong river with our eyes and our resolution fixed on that point of the opposite shore on which we purpose to land; but, gradually giving way to the torrent, are glad, by the aid perhaps of branch or bush, to extricate ourselves at some distant and perhaps dangerous landing-place, much farther down the stream than that on which we had fixed our intentions.

Hoping that the Courteous Reader will afford to a known and familiar acquaintance some portion of the favour which he extended to a disguised candidate for his applause, I beg leave to subscribe myself his obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, *October* 1, 1827.

SUCH was the little narrative which I thought proper to put forth in October 1827: nor have I much to add to it now. About to appear for the first time in my own name in this department of letters, it occurred to me that something in the shape of a periodical publication might carry with it a certain air of novelty, and I was willing to break, if I may so

express it, the abruptness of my personal forthcoming, by investing an imaginary coadjutor with at least as much distinctness of individual existence as I had ever previously thought it worth while to bestow on shadows of the same convenient tribe. Of course, it had never been in my contemplation to invite the assistance of any real person in the sustaining of my quasi-editorial character and labours. It had long been my opinion that anything like a literary *picnic* is likely to end in suggesting comparisons, justly termed odious, and therefore to be avoided: and, indeed, I had also had some occasion to know that promises of assistance, in efforts of that order, are apt to be more magnificent than the subsequent performance. I therefore planned a Miscellany, to be dependent, after the old fashion, on my own resources alone, and, although conscious enough that the moment which assigned to the Author of Waverley "a local habitation and a name" had seriously endangered his spell, I felt inclined to adopt the sentiment of my old hero Montrose, and to say to myself, that in literature as in war,

> He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch,
> To win or lose it all.

To the particulars explanatory of the plan of these Chronicles, which the reader is presented with in Chapter II. by the imaginary Editor, Mr. Croftangry, I have now to add, that the lady termed in his narrative Mrs. Bethune Baliol was designed to shadow out in its leading points the interesting character of a dear friend of mine, Mrs. Murray Keith,[1] whose death,

[1] The Keiths of Craig, in Kincardineshire, descended from John Keith, fourth son of William, second Earl Marischal, who got from his father, about 1480, the lands of Craig, and part of Garvock, in that county. In Douglas's Baronage, 443 to 445, is a pedigree

occurring shortly before, had saddened a wide circle, much attached to her, as well for her genuine virtue and amiable qualities of disposition as for the extent of information which she possessed, and the delightful manner in which she was used to communicate it. In truth, the author had, on many occasions, been indebted to her vivid memory for the *substratum* of his Scottish fictions — and she accordingly had been, from an early period, at no loss to fix the Waverley Novels on the right culprit.

In the sketch of Chrystal Croftangry's own history, the author has been accused of introducing some not polite allusions to respectable living individuals : but he may safely, he presumes, pass over such an insinuation. The first of the narratives which Mr. Croftangry proceeds to lay before the public, "The Highland Widow," was derived from Mrs. Murray Keith, and is given, with the exception of a few additional circumstances — the introduction of which I am rather inclined to regret — very much as the excellent old lady used to tell the story. Neither the Highland cicerone Mac-Leish, nor the demure waiting-woman, were drawn from

of that family. Colonel Robert Keith of Craig (the seventh in descent from John), by his wife Agnes, daughter of Robert Murray of Murrayshall, of the family of Blackbarony, widow of Colonel Stirling, of the family of Keir, had one son — viz. Robert Keith of Craig, ambassador to the court of Vienna, afterwards to St. Petersburg, which latter situation he held at the accession of King George III., — who died at Edinburgh in 1774. He married Margaret, second daughter of Sir William Cunningham of Caprington, by Janet, only child and heiress of Sir James Dick of Prestonfield; and, among other children of this marriage, were, the late well-known diplomatist, Sir Robert Murray Keith, K.B., a general in the army, and for some time ambassador at Vienna; Sir Basil Keith, Knight, captain in the navy, who died governor of Jamaica; and my excellent friend, Anne Murray Keith, who ultimately came into possession of the family estates, and died not long before the date of this Introduction (1831).

imagination: and on re-reading my tale, after the lapse of a few years, and comparing its effect with my remembrance of my worthy friend's oral narration, which was certainly extremely affecting, I cannot but suspect myself of having marred its simplicity by some of those interpolations which, at the time when I penned them, no doubt passed with myself for embellishments.

The next tale, entitled "The Two Drovers," I learned from another old friend, the late George Constable, Esq. of Wallace Craigie, near Dundee, whom I have already introduced to my reader as the original Antiquary of Monkbarns. He had been present, I think, at the trial at Carlisle, and seldom mentioned the venerable judge's charge to the jury without shedding tears — which had peculiar pathos, as flowing down features carrying rather a sarcastic or almost a cynical expression.

This worthy gentleman's reputation for shrewd Scottish sense — knowledge of our national antiquities — and a racy humour peculiar to himself, must be still remembered. For myself, I have pride in recording that for many years we were, in Wordsworth's language,

> a pair of friends, though I was young,
> And "George" was seventy-two.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *Aug.* 15, 1831.

APPENDIX

TO

INTRODUCTION.

It has been suggested to the Author that it might be well to reprint here a detailed account of the public dinner alluded to in the foregoing Introduction, as given in the newspapers of the time; and the reader is accordingly presented with the following extract from the EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL for Wednesday, 28th February, 1827:—

THEATRICAL FUND DINNER.

BEFORE proceeding with our account of this very interesting festival — for so it may be termed — it is our duty to present to our readers the following letter, which we have received from the President.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL.

SIR, — I am extremely sorry I have not leisure to correct the copy you sent me of what I am stated to have said at the Dinner for the Theatrical Fund. I am no orator; and upon such occasions as are alluded to I say as well as I can what the time requires.

However, I hope your reporter has been more accurate in other instances than in mine. I have corrected one passage, in which I am made to speak with great impropriety and petulance respecting the opinions of those who do not approve of dramatic entertainments. I have restored what I said, which was meant to be respectful, as every objection founded in conscience is, in my opinion, entitled to be so treated. Other

errors I left as I found them, it being of little consequence whether I spoke sense or nonsense, in what was merely intended for the purpose of the hour.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

EDINBURGH, *Monday.*

The Theatrical Fund Dinner, which took place on Friday, in the Assembly Rooms, was conducted with admirable spirit. The Chairman, Sir WALTER SCOTT, among his other great qualifications, is well fitted to enliven such an entertainment. His manners are extremely easy, and his style of speaking simple and natural, yet full of vivacity and point; and he has the art, if it be art, of relaxing into a certain homeliness of manner, without losing one particle of his dignity. He thus takes off some of that solemn formality which belongs to such meetings, and, by his easy and graceful familiarity, imparts to them somewhat of the pleasing character of a private entertainment. Near Sir W. Scott sat the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Bart., Admiral Adam, Baron Clerk Rattray, Gilbert Innes, Esq., James Walker, Esq., Robert Dundas, Esq., Alexander Smith, Esq., &c.

The cloth being removed, "Non nobis Domine" was sung by Messrs. Thorne, Swift, Collier, and Hartley, after which the following toasts were given from the chair:—

"The King"—all the honours.

"The Duke of Clarence and the Royal Family."

The CHAIRMAN, in proposing the next toast, which he wished to be drunk in solemn silence, said it was to the memory of a regretted prince, whom we had lately lost. Every individual would at once conjecture to whom he alluded. He had no intention to dwell on

his military merits. They had been told in the senate ; they had been repeated in the cottage ; and, whenever a soldier was the theme, his name was never far distant. But it was chiefly in connection with the business of this meeting, which his late Royal Highness had condescended in a particular manner to patronise, that they were called on to drink his health. To that charity he had often sacrificed his time, and had given up the little leisure which he had from important business. He was always ready to attend on every occasion of this kind, and it was in that view that he proposed to drink to the memory of his late Royal Highness the Duke of York.— Drunk in solemn silence.

The CHAIRMAN then requested that gentlemen would fill a bumper as full as it would hold, while he would say only a few words. He was in the habit of hearing speeches, and he knew the feeling with which long ones were regarded. He was sure that it was perfectly unnecessary for him to enter into any vindication of the dramatic art, which they had come here to support. This, however, he considered to be the proper time and proper occasion for him to say a few words on that love of representation which was an innate feeling in human nature. It was the first amusement that the child had — it grew greater as he grew up ; and, even in the decline of life, nothing amused so much as when a common tale is told with appropriate personification. The first thing a child does is to ape his schoolmaster, by flogging a chair. The assuming a character ourselves, or the seeing others assume an imaginary character, is an enjoyment natural to humanity. It was implanted in our very nature, to take pleasure from such representations, at proper times and on proper occasions. In all ages the theatrical art had kept pace with the improvement of mankind, and with the progress of letters and the fine arts. As man has advanced from the ruder

stages of society, the love of dramatic representations has increased, and all works of this nature have been improved, in character and in structure. They had only to turn their eyes to the history of ancient Greece, although he did not pretend to be very deeply versed in its ancient drama. Its first tragic poet commanded a body of troops at the battle of Marathon. Sophocles and Euripides were men of rank in Athens, when Athens was in its highest renown. They shook Athens with their discourses, as their theatrical works shook the theatre itself. If they turned to France in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, that era which is the classical history of that country, they would find that it was referred to by all Frenchmen as the golden age of the drama there. And also in England, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the drama was at its highest pitch, when the nation began to mingle deeply and wisely in the general politics of Europe, not only not receiving laws from others, but giving laws to the world, and vindicating the rights of mankind. (Cheers.) There have been various times when the dramatic art subsequently fell into disrepute. Its professors have been stigmatised; and laws have been passed against them, less dishonourable to them than to the statesmen by whom they were proposed, and to the legislators by whom they were adopted. What were the times in which these laws were passed? Was it not when virtue was seldom inculcated as a moral duty, that we were required to relinquish the most rational of all our amusements, when the clergy were enjoined celibacy, and when the laity were denied the right to read their bibles? He thought that it must have been from a notion of penance that they erected the drama into an ideal place of profaneness, and spoke of the theatre as of the tents of sin. He did not mean to dispute that there were many excellent persons who thought differently from him

and he disclaimed the slightest idea of charging them with bigotry or hypocrisy on that account. He gave them full credit for their tender consciences, in making these objections, although they did not appear relevant to him. But to these persons, being, as he believed them, men of worth and piety, he was sure the purpose of this meeting would furnish some apology for an error, if there be any, in the opinions of those who attend. They would approve the gift, although they might differ in other points. Such might not approve of going to the theatre, but at least could not deny that they might give away from their superfluity what was required for the relief of the sick, the support of the aged, and the comfort of the afflicted. These were duties enjoined by our religion itself. (Loud cheers.)

The performers are in a particular manner entitled to the support or regard, when in old age or distress, of those who had partaken of the amusements of those places which they render an ornament to society. Their art was of a peculiarly delicate and precarious nature. They had to serve a long apprenticeship. It was very long before even the first-rate geniuses could acquire the mechanical knowledge of the stage business. They must languish long in obscurity before they can avail themselves of their natural talents; and after that, they have but a short space of time, during which they are fortunate if they can provide the means of comfort in the decline of life. That comes late, and lasts but a short time; after which they are left dependent. Their limbs fail — their teeth are loosened — their voice is lost — and they are left, after giving happiness to others, in a most disconsolate state. The public were liberal and generous to those deserving their protection. It was a sad thing to be dependent on the favour, or, he might say, in plain terms, on the caprice, of the public; and this more particularly for a

class of persons of whom extreme prudence is not the character. There might be instances of opportunities being neglected; but let each gentleman tax himself, and consider the opportunities *they* had neglected, and the sums of money *they* had wasted; let every gentleman look into his own bosom, and say whether these were circumstances which would soften his own feelings, were he to be plunged into distress. He put it to every generous bosom — to every better feeling — to say what consolation was it to old age to be told that you might have made provision at a time which had been neglected —(loud cheers)— and to find it objected, that if you had pleased you might have been wealthy. He had hitherto been speaking of what, in theatrical language, was called *stars*, but they were sometimes falling ones. There were another class of sufferers naturally and necessarily connected with the theatre, without whom it was impossible to go on. The sailors have a saying, Every man cannot be a boatswain. If there must be a great actor to act Hamlet, there must also be people to act Laertes, the King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, otherwise a drama cannot go on. If even Garrick himself were to rise from the dead, he could not act Hamlet alone. There must be generals, colonels, commanding officers, subalterns. But what are the private soldiers to do? Many have mistaken their own talents, and have been driven in early youth to try the stage, to which they are not competent. He would know what to say to the indifferent poet and to the bad artist. He would say that it was foolish, and he would recommend to the poet to become a scribe, and the artist to paint sign-posts — (loud laughter). — But you could not send the player adrift, for if he cannot play Hamlet he must play Guildenstern. Where there are many labourers, wages must be low, and no man in such a situation can decently support a wife and family, and

save something off his income for old age. What is this man to do in later life? Are you to cast him oft like an old hinge, or a piece of useless machinery, which has done its work? To a person who had contributed to our amusement, this would be unkind, ungrateful, and unchristian. His wants are not of his own making, but arise from the natural sources of sickness and old age. It cannot be denied that there is one class of sufferers to whom no imprudence can be ascribed, except on first entering on the profession. After putting his hand to the dramatic plough, he cannot draw back; but must continue at it, and toil, till death release him from want, or charity, by its milder influence, steps in to render that want more tolerable. He had little more to say, except that he sincerely hoped that the collection to-day, from the number of respectable gentlemen present, would meet the views entertained by the patrons. He hoped it would do so. They should not be disheartened. Though they could not do a great deal, they might do something. They had this consolation, that everything they parted with from their superfluity would do some good. They would sleep the better themselves when they had been the means of giving sleep to others. It was ungrateful and unkind, that those who had sacrificed their youth to our amusement should not receive the reward due to them, but should be reduced to hard fare in their old age. We cannot think of poor Falstaff going to bed without his cup of sack, or Macbeth fed on bones as marrowless as those of Banquo. — (Loud cheers and laughter.) — As he believed that they were all as fond of the dramatic art as he was in his younger days, he would propose that they should drink "The Theatrical Fund," with three times three.

Mr. Mackay rose, on behalf of his brethren, to return their thanks for the toast just drunk. Many of

the gentlemen present, he said, were perhaps not fully acquainted with the nature and intention of the institution, and it might not be amiss to enter into some explanation on the subject. With whomsoever the idea of a Theatrical Fund might have originated (and it had been disputed by the surviving relatives of two or three individuals), certain it was, that the first legally constituted Theatrical Fund owed its origin to one of the brightest ornaments of the profession, the late David Garrick. That eminent actor conceived that, by a weekly subscription in the theatre, a Fund might be raised among its members from which a portion might be given to those of his less fortunate brethren, and thus an opportunity would be offered for prudence to provide what fortune had denied — a comfortable provision for the winter of life. With the welfare of his profession constantly at heart, the zeal with which he laboured to uphold its respectability, and to impress upon the minds of his brethren, not only the necessity, but the blessing of independence, the Fund became his peculiar care. He drew up a form of laws for its government, procured, at his own expense, the passing of an Act of Parliament for its confirmation, bequeathed to it a handsome legacy, and thus became the father of the Drury Lane Fund. So constant was his attachment to this infant establishment, that he chose to grace the close of the brightest theatrical life on record by the last display of his transcendent talent on the occasion of a benefit for this child of his adoption, which ever since has gone by the name of the Garrick Fund. In imitation of his noble example, Funds have been established in several provincial theatres in England; but it remained for Mrs. Henry Siddons and Mr. William Murray to become the founders of the first Theatrical Fund in Scotland. (Cheers.) This Fund commenced under the most favourable auspices; it was liberally

supported by the management, and highly patronised by the public. Notwithstanding, it fell short in the accomplishment of its intentions. What those intentions were, he (Mr. Mackay) need not recapitulate, but they failed; and he did not hesitate to confess that a want of energy on the part of the performers was the probable cause. A new set of rules and regulations were lately drawn up, submitted to and approved of at a general meeting of the members of the theatre; and accordingly the Fund was remodelled on the 1st of January last. And here he thought he did but echo the feelings of his brethren, by publicly acknowledging the obligations they were under to the management, for the aid given, and the warm interest they had all along taken in the welfare of the Fund. (Cheers.) The nature and object of the profession had been so well treated of by the President, that he would say nothing; but of the numerous offspring of science and genius that court precarious fame, the actor boasts the slenderest claim of all; the sport of fortune, the creatures of fashion, and the victims of caprice — they are seen, heard, and admired, but to be forgot — they leave no trace, no memorial of their existence — they "come like shadows, so depart." (Cheers.) Yet humble though their pretensions be, there was no profession, trade, or calling where such a combination of requisites, mental and bodily, were indispensable. In all others the principal may practise after he has been visited by the afflicting hand of Providence — some by the loss of limb — some of voice — and many, when the faculty of the mind is on the wane, may be assisted by dutiful children, or devoted servants. Not so the actor — he must retain all he ever did possess, or sink dejected to a mournful home. (Applause.) Yet while they are toiling for ephemeral theatric fame, how very few ever possess the means of hoarding in their youth that

which would give bread in old age! But now a brighter prospect dawned upon them, and to the success of this their infant establishment they looked with hope, as to a comfortable and peaceful home in their declining years. He concluded by tendering to the meeting, in the name of his brethren and sisters, their unfeigned thanks for their liberal support, and begged to propose the health of the Patrons of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. (Cheers.)

Lord MEADOWBANK said that, by desire of his hon. friend in the chair, and of his noble friend at his right hand, he begged leave to return thanks for the honour which had been conferred on the patrons of this excellent Institution. He could answer for himself — he could answer for them all — that they were deeply impressed with the meritorious objects which it has in view, and of their anxious wish to promote its interests. For himself, he hoped he might be permitted to say that he was rather surprised at finding his own name as one of the patrons, associated with so many individuals of high rank and powerful influence. But it was an excuse for those who had placed him in a situation so honourable and so distinguished, that, when this charity was instituted, he happened to hold a high and responsible station under the Crown, when he might have been of use in assisting and promoting its objects. His lordship much feared that he could have little expectation, situated as he now was, of doing either; but he could confidently assert that few things would give him greater gratification than being able to contribute to its prosperity and support; and, indeed, when one recollects the pleasure which at all periods of life he has received from the exhibitions of the stage, and the exertions of the meritorious individuals for whose aid this fund has been established, he must be divested both of gratitude and feeling who

would not give his best endeavours to promote its welfare. And now, that he might in some measure repay the gratification which had been afforded himself, he would beg leave to propose a toast, the health of one of the patrons, a great and distinguished individual, whose name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, can never be received, not, he would say, with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight, but with those of rapture and enthusiasm. In doing so he felt that he stood in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of his hon. friend to whom he alluded, some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions which found a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language, the sincere language, of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom he referred. But it was no longer possible, consistently with the respect to one's auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled — the *darkness visible* has been cleared away — and the Great Unknown — the minstrel of our native land — the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and the manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the hearts and the eyes of his affectionate and admiring countrymen. If he himself were capable of imagining all that belonged to this mighty subject — were he even able to give utterance to all that as a friend, as a man, and as a Scotsman, he must feel regarding it, yet knowing, as he well did, that this illustrious individual was not more distinguished for

his towering talents than for those feelings which rendered such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, he would, on that account, stil refrain from doing that which would otherwise be no less pleasing to him than to his audience. But this, his lordship hoped he would be allowed to say (his auditors would not pardon him were he to say less), we owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of our country. It is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors and the struggles of our illustrious patriots — who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy — have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure nation, and who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign countries. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. (Loud and rapturous applause.)

Sir Walter Scott certainly did not think that, in coming here to-day, he would have the task of acknowledging, before three hundred gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, had been remarkably well kept. He was now before the bar of his country, and might be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; yet he was sure that every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. He did not now think it necessary to enter into the reasons of his long silence. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in it. He had now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, were entirely imputable to himself. (Long and

loud cheering.) He was afraid to think on what he had done. "Look on't again I dare not." He had thus far unbosomed himself, and he knew that it would be reported to the public. He meant, then, seriously to state, that when he said he was the author, he was the total and undivided author. With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels; and he would dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented some of those characters, of which he had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a degree of liveliness which rendered him grateful. He would propose the health of his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie — (loud applause) — and he was sure that, when the author of "Waverley" and 'Rob Roy" drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it would be received with that degree of applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, and that they would take care that on the present occasion it should be PRODIGIOUS! (Long and vehement applause.)

Mr. MACKAY, who here spoke with great humour in the character of Bailie Jarvie.— My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could not have believed that his son could hae had sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!

Sir WALTER SCOTT. — The Small Known now, Mr. Bailie.

Mr. MACKAY.— He had been long identified with the Bailie, and he was vain of the cognomen which he had now worn for eight years; and he questioned if any of his brethren in the council had given such universal satisfaction. (Loud laughter and applause.)

Before he sat down, he begged to propose "The Lord Provost and the City of Edinburgh."

Sir WALTER SCOTT apologised for the absence of the Lord Provost, who had gone to London on public business.

Tune — "Within a mile of Edinburgh town."

Sir WALTER SCOTT gave "The Duke of Wellington and the Army."

Glee — "How merrily we live."

"Lord Melville and the Navy, that fought till they left nobody to fight with, like an arch sportsman who clears all and goes after the game."

Mr. PAT. ROBERTSON. — They had heard this evening a toast, which had been received with intense delight, which will be published in every newspaper, and will be hailed with joy by all Europe. He had one toast assigned him which he had great pleasure in giving. He was sure that the stage had in all ages a great effect on the morals and manners of the people. It was very desirable that the stage should be well regulated; and there was no criterion by which its regulation could be better determined than by the moral character and personal respectability of the performers. He was not one of those stern moralists who objected to the theatre. The most fastidious moralist could not possibly apprehend any injury from the stage of Edinburgh, as it was presently managed, and so long as it was adorned by that illustrious individual, Mrs. Henry Siddons, whose public exhibitions were not more remarkable for feminine grace and delicacy than was her private character for every virtue which could be admired in domestic life. He would conclude with reciting a few words from Shakspeare, in a spirit not of contradiction to those stern moralists who disliked the theatre, but of meekness: "Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used,

for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time." He then gave "Mrs. Henry Siddons, and success to the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh."

Mr. MURRAY.— Gentlemen, I rise to return thanks for the honour you have done Mrs. Siddons, in doing which I am somewhat difficulted, from the extreme delicacy which attends a brother's expatiating upon a sister's claims to honours publicly paid —(hear, hear) — yet, gentlemen, your kindness emboldens me to say, that were I to give utterance to all a brother's feelings, I should not exaggerate those claims. (Loud applause.) I therefore, gentlemen, thank you most cordially for the honour you have done her, and shall now request permission to make an observation on the establishment of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. Mr. Mackay has done Mrs. Henry Siddons and myself the honour to ascribe the establishment to us ; but no, gentlemen, it owes its origin to a higher source — the publication of the novel of "Rob Roy" — the unprecedented success of the opera adapted from that popular production. (Hear, hear.) It was that success which relieved the Edinburgh Theatre from its difficulties, and enabled Mrs. Siddons to carry into effect the establishment of a fund she had long desired, but was prevented from effecting, from the unsettled state of her theatrical concerns. I therefore hope that, in future years, when the aged and infirm actor derives relief from this fund, he will, in the language of the gallant Highlander, "Cast his eye to good old Scotland, and not forget Rob Roy." (Loud applause.)

Sir WALTER SCOTT here stated that Mrs. Siddons wanted the means but not the will of beginning the Theatrical Fund. He here alluded to the great merits of Mr. Murray's management, and to his merits as an actor, which were of the first order, and of which every person who attends the theatre must be sensible ; and

after alluding to the embarrassments with which the theatre had been at one period threatened, he concluded by giving the health of Mr. Murray, which was drunk with three times three.

Mr. MURRAY. — Gentlemen, I wish I could believe that, in any degree, I merited the compliments with which it has pleased Sir Walter Scott to preface the proposal of my health, or the very flattering manner in which you have done me the honour to receive it. The approbation of such an assembly is most gratifying to me, and might encourage feelings of vanity, were not such feelings crushed by my conviction that no man holding the situation I have so long held in Edinburgh could have failed, placed in the peculiar circumstances in which I have been placed. Gentlemen, I shall not insult your good taste by eulogiums upon your judgment or kindly feeling, though to the first I owe any improvement I may have made as an actor, and certainly my success as a manager to the second. (Applause.) When, upon the death of my dear brother the late Mr. Siddons, it was proposed that I should undertake the management of the Edinburgh Theatre, I confess I drew back, doubting my capability to free it from the load of debt and difficulty with which it was surrounded. In this state of anxiety, I solicited the advice of one who had ever honoured me with his kindest regard, and whose name no member of my profession can pronounce without feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude — I allude to the late Mr. John Kemble. (Great applause.) To him I applied ; and with the repetition of his advice I shall cease to trespass upon your time — (hear, hear) — "My dear William, fear not ; integrity and assiduity must prove an overmatch for all difficulty ; and though I approve your not indulging a vain confidence in your own ability, and viewing with respectful apprehension the judgment of the audience you have to act before,

yet be assured that judgment will ever be tempered by the feeling that you are acting for the widow and the fatherless." (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, those words have never passed from my mind ; and I feel convinced that you have pardoned my many errors, from the feeling that I was striving for the widow and the fatherless. (Long and enthusiastic applause followed Mr. Murray's address.)

Sir WALTER SCOTT gave the health of the Stewards.

Mr. VANDENHOFF. — Mr. President and Gentlemen, the honour conferred upon the Stewards, in the very flattering compliment you have just paid us, calls forth our warmest acknowledgments. In tendering you our thanks for the approbation you have been pleased to express of our humble exertions, I would beg leave to advert to the cause in which we have been engaged. Yet, surrounded as I am by the genius — the eloquence of this enlightened city, I cannot but feel the presumption which ventures to address you on so interesting a subject. Accustomed to speak in the language of others, I feel quite at a loss for terms wherein to clothe the sentiments excited by the present occasion. (Applause.) The nature of the Institution which has sought your fostering patronage, and the objects which it contemplates, have been fully explained to you. But, gentlemen, the relief which it proposes is not a gratuitous relief — but to be purchased by the individual contribution of its members towards the general good. This Fund lends no encouragement to idleness or improvidence ; but it offers an opportunity to prudence, in vigour and youth, to make provision against the evening of life and its attendant infirmity. A period is fixed at which we admit the plea of age as an exemption from professional labour. It is painful to behold the veteran on the stage (compelled by necessity) contending against physical decay, mocking the joyousness of mirth with the

feebleness of age, when the energies decline, when the memory fails, and "the big manly voice, turning again towards childish treble, pipes and whistles in the sound." We would remove him from the mimic scene, where fiction constitutes the charm; we would not view old age caricaturing itself. (Applause.) But as our means may be found, in time of need, inadequate to the fulfilment of our wishes — fearful of raising expectations which we may be unable to gratify — desirous not "to keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope" — we have presumed to court the assistance of the friends of the drama to strengthen our infant institution. Our appeal has been successful, beyond our most sanguine expectations. The distinguished patronage conferred on us by your presence on this occasion, and the substantial support which your benevolence has so liberally afforded to our institution, must impress every member of the Fund with the most grateful sentiments — sentiments which no language can express, no time obliterate. (Applause.) I will not trespass longer on your attention. I would the task of acknowledging our obligation had fallen into abler hands. (Hear, hear.) In the name of the Stewards, I most respectfully and cordially thank you for the honour you have done us, which greatly overpays our poor endeavours. (Applause.)

[This speech, though rather inadequately reported, was one of the best delivered on this occasion. That it was creditable to Mr. Vandenhoff's taste and feelings, the preceding sketch will show; but how much it was so, it does *not* show.]

Mr. J. Cay gave Professor Wilson and the University of Edinburgh, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments.

Lord Meadowbank, after a suitable eulogium, gave the Earl of Fife, which was drunk with three times three.

Earl FIFE expressed his high gratification at the honour conferred on him. He intimated his approbation of the Institution, and his readiness to promote its success by every means in his power. He concluded with giving the health of the Company of Edinburgh.

Mr. JONES, on rising to return thanks, being received with considerable applause, said he was truly grateful for the kind encouragement he had experienced, but the novelty of the situation in which he now was renewed all the feelings he experienced when he first saw himself announced in the bills as a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage. (Laughter and applause.) Although in the presence of those whose indulgence had, in another sphere, so often shielded him from the penalties of inability, he was unable to execute the task which had so unexpectedly devolved upon him in behalf of his brethren and himself. He therefore begged the company to imagine all that grateful hearts could prompt the most eloquent to utter, and that would be a copy of their feelings. (Applause.) He begged to trespass another moment on their attention, for the purpose of expressing the thanks of the members of the Fund to the Gentlemen of the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians, who, finding that this meeting was appointed to take place on the same evening with their concert, had in the handsomest manner agreed to postpone it. Although it was his duty thus to preface the toast he had to propose, he was certain the meeting required no further inducement than the recollection of the pleasure the exertions of those gentlemen had often afforded them within those walls, to join heartily in drinking "Health and prosperity to the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians." (Applause.)

Mr. PAT. ROBERTSON proposed "the health of Mr. Jeffrey," whose absence was owing to indisposition.

The public was well aware that he was the most distinguished advocate at the bar; he was likewise distinguished for the kindness, frankness, and cordial manner in which he communicated with the junior members of the profession, to the esteem of whom his splendid talents would always entitle him.

Mr. J. Maconochie gave "the health of Mrs. Siddons, senior — the most distinguished ornament of the stage."

Sir W. Scott said that, if anything could reconcile him to old age, it was the reflection that he had seen the rising as well as the setting sun of Mrs. Siddons. He remembered well their breakfasting near to the theatre — waiting the whole day — the crushing at the doors at six o'clock — and their going in and counting their fingers till seven o'clock. But the very first step — the very first word which she uttered, was sufficient to overpay him for all his labours. The house was literally electrified; and it was only from witnessing the effects of her genius that he could guess to what a pitch theatrical excellence could be carried. Those young gentlemen who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise and its meridian, leave to hold our heads a little higher.

Mr. Dundas gave "The memory of Home, the author of 'Douglas.'"

Mr. Mackay here announced that the subscription for the night amounted to £280; and he expressed gratitude for this substantial proof of their kindness. [We are happy to state that subscriptions have since flowed in very liberally.]

Mr. Mackay here entertained the company with a pathetic song.

Sir Walter Scott apologised for having so long forgotten their native land. He would now give Scot-

land, the Land of Cakes. He would give every river every loch, every hill, from Tweed to Johnnie Groat's House — every lass in her cottage and countess in her castle; and may her sons stand by her, as their fathers did before them, and he who would not drink a bumper to his toast, may he never drink whisky more!

Sir Walter Scott here gave Lord Meadowbank, who returned thanks.

Mr. H. G. Bell said that he should not have ventured to intrude himself upon the attention of the assembly, did he not feel confident that the toast he begged to have the honour to propose would make amends for the very imperfect manner in which he might express his sentiments regarding it. It had been said that, notwithstanding the mental supremacy of the present age, notwithstanding that the page of our history was studded with names destined also for the page of immortality — that the genius of Shakspeare was extinct, and the fountain of his inspiration dried up. It might be that these observations were unfortunately correct, or it might be that we were bewildered with a name, not disappointed of the reality — for though Shakspeare had brought a Hamlet, an Othello, and a Macbeth, an Ariel, a Juliet, and a Rosalind, upon the stage, were there not authors living who had brought as varied, as exquisitely painted, and as undying a range of characters into our hearts? The shape of the mere mould into which genius poured its golden treasures was surely a matter of little moment — let it be called a Tragedy, a Comedy, or a Waverley Novel. But even among the dramatic authors of the present day, he was unwilling to allow that there was a great and palpable decline from the glory of preceding ages, and his toast alone would bear him out in denying the truth of the proposition. After eulogising the names of Baillie, Byron, Coleridge, Maturin and

others, he begged to have the honour of proposing the health of James Sheridan Knowles.

Sir Walter Scott. — Gentlemen, I crave a bumper all over. The last toast reminds me of a neglect of duty. Unaccustomed to a public duty of this kind, errors in conducting the ceremonial of it may be excused, and omissions pardoned. Perhaps I have made one or two omissions in the course of the evening, for which I trust you will grant me your pardon and indulgence. One thing in particular I have omitted, and I would now wish to make amends for it, by a libation of reverence and respect to the memory of Shakspeare. He was a man of universal genius, and, from a period soon after his own era to the present day, he has been universally idolised. When I come to his honoured name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in this way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts. He was a man of obscure origin, and, as a player, limited in his acquirements, but he was born evidently with a universal genius. His eyes glanced at all the varied aspects of life, and his fancy portrayed with equal talents the king on the throne, and the clown who crackles his chestnuts at a Christmas fire. Whatever note he takes, he strikes it just and true, and awakens a corresponding chord in our own bosoms. Gentlemen, I propose "The memory of William Shakspeare."

Glee — "Lightly tread, 'tis hallowed ground."

After the glee, Sir Walter rose, and begged to propose as a toast the health of a lady whose living merit is not a little honourable to Scotland. The toast (said

he) is also flattering to the national vanity of a Scotsman, as the lady whom I intend to propose is a native of this country. From the public her works have met with the most favourable reception. One piece of hers, in particular, was often acted here of late years, and gave pleasure of no mean kind to many brilliant and fashionable audiences. In her private character she (he begged leave to say) is as remarkable as in a public sense she is for her genius. In short, he would in one word name — "Joanna Baillie."

This health being drunk, Mr. Thorne was called on for a song, and sang, with great taste and feeling, "The Anchor's weighed."

W. Menzies, Esq., Advocate, rose to propose the health of a gentleman for many years connected at intervals with the dramatic art in Scotland. Whether we look at the range of characters he performs, or at the capacity which he evinces in executing those which he undertakes, he is equally to be admired. In all his parts he is unrivalled. The individual to whom he alluded is (said he) well known to the gentlemen present, in the characters of Malvolio, Lord Ogleby, and the Green Man; and, in addition to his other qualities, he merits, for his perfection in these characters, the grateful sense of this meeting. He would wish, in the first place, to drink his health as an actor; but he was not less estimable in domestic life, and as a private gentleman; and when he announced him as one whom the Chairman had honoured with his friendship, he was sure that all present would cordially join him in drinking "The health of Mr. Terry."

Mr. William Allan, banker, said that he did not rise with the intention of making a speech. He merely wished to contribute in a few words to the mirth of the evening — an evening which certainly had not passed off without some blunders. It had been understood —

at least he had learnt or supposed, from the expressions of Mr. Pritchard — that it would be sufficient to put a paper, with the name of the contributor, into the box, and that the gentleman thus contributing would be called on for the money next morning. He, for his part, had committed a blunder, but it might serve as a caution to those who may be present at the dinner of next year. He had merely put in his name, written on a slip of paper, without the money. But he would recommend that, as some of the gentlemen might be in the same situation, the box should be again sent round, and he was confident that they, as well as he, would redeem their error.

Sir WALTER SCOTT said that the meeting was somewhat in the situation of Mrs. Anne Page, who had £300 and possibilities. We have already got, said he, £280, but I should like, I confess, to have the £300. He would gratify himself by proposing the health of an honourable person, the Lord Chief Baron, whom England has sent to us, and connecting with it that of his "yokefellow on the bench," as Shakspeare says, Mr. Baron Clerk — The Court of Exchequer.

Mr. BARON CLERK regretted the absence of his learned brother. None, he was sure, could be more generous in his nature, or more ready to help a Scottish purpose.

Sir WALTER SCOTT.— There is one who ought to be remembered on this occasion. He is, indeed, well entitled to our grateful recollection — one, in short, to whom the drama in this city owes much. He succeeded, not without trouble, and perhaps at some considerable sacrifice, in establishing a theatre. The younger part of the company may not recollect the theatre to which I allude; but there are some who with me may remember by name a place called Carrubber's Close. There Allan Ramsay established his little theatre. His own pastoral was not fit for the stage,

but it has its admirers in those who love the Doric language in which it is written; and it is not without merits of a very peculiar kind. But, laying aside all considerations of his literary merit, Allan was a good jovial honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best. — The memory of Allan Ramsay.

Mr. MURRAY, on being requested, sang "'Twas merry in the hall," and at the conclusion was greeted with repeated rounds of applause.

Mr. JONES. — One omission I conceive has been made. The cause of the Fund has been ably advocated, but it is still susceptible, in my opinion, of an additional charm —

> Without the smile from partial beauty won,
> Oh, what were man? — a world without a sun!

And there would not be a darker spot in poetry than would be the corner in Shakspeare Square, if, like its fellow, the Register Office, the theatre were deserted by the ladies. They are, in fact, our most attractive stars. — "The Patronesses of the Theatre — the Ladies of the City of Edinburgh." This toast I ask leave to drink with all the honours which conviviality can confer.

Mr. PATRICK ROBERTSON would be the last man willingly to introduce any topic calculated to interrupt the harmony of the evening; yet he felt himself treading upon ticklish ground when he approached the region of the Nor' Loch. He assured the company, however, that he was not about to enter on the subject of the Improvement Bill. They all knew that if the public were unanimous — if the consent of all parties were obtained — if the rights and interests of everybody were therein attended to, saved, reserved, respected, and excepted — if everybody agreed to it — and, finally, a most essential point — if nobody opposed it — then,

and in that case, and provided also that due intimation were given — the bill in question might pass — would pass — or might, could, would, or should pass — all expenses being defrayed. (Laughter.) He was the advocate of neither champion, and would neither avail himself of the absence of the Right Hon. the Lord Provost, nor take advantage of the non-appearance of his friend Mr. Cockburn. (Laughter.) But in the midst of these civic broils there had been elicited a ray of hope that, at some future period, in Beresford Park, or some other place, if all parties were consulted and satisfied, and if intimation were duly made at the Kirk doors of all the parishes in Scotland, in terms of the statute in that behalf provided — the people of Edinburgh might by possibility get a new theatre. (Cheers and laughter.) But wherever the belligerent powers might be pleased to set down this new theatre, he was sure they all hoped to meet the Old Company in it. He should therefore propose — "Better accommodation to the Old Company in the new theatre, site unknown" — Mr. Robertson's speech was most humorously given, and he sat down amidst loud cheers and laughter.

Sir Walter Scott. — Wherever the new theatre is built, I hope it will not be large. There are two errors which we commonly commit — the one arising from our pride, the other from our poverty. If there are twelve plans, it is odds but the largest, without any regard to comfort, or an eye to the probable expense, is adopted. There was the College projected on this scale, and undertaken in the same manner, and who shall see the end of it? It has been building all my life, and may probably last during the lives of my children, and my children's children. Let not the same prophetic hymn be sung, when we commence a new theatre, which was performed on the occasion

of laying the foundation-stone of a certain edifice, "Behold the endless work begun." Play-going folks should attend somewhat to convenience. The new theatre should, in the first place, be such as may be finished in eighteen months or two years; and, in the second place, it should be one in which we can hear our old friends with comfort. It is better that a moderate-sized house should be crowded now and then, than to have a large theatre with benches continually empty, to the discouragement of the actors, and the discomfort of the spectators. (Applause.) He then commented in flattering terms on the genius of Mackenzie and his private worth, and concluded by proposing "The health of Henry Mackenzie, Esq."

Immediately afterwards he said: Gentlemen,—It is now wearing late, and I shall request permission to retire. Like Partridge, I may say, "*Non sum qualis eram.*" At my time of day, I can agree with Lord Ogilvie as to his rheumatism, and say, "There's a twinge." I hope, therefore, you will excuse me for leaving the chair. (The worthy Baronet then retired amidst long, loud, and rapturous cheering.)

Mr. Patrick Robertson was then called to the chair by common acclamation.

Gentlemen, said Mr. Robertson, I take the liberty of asking you to fill a bumper to the very brim. There is not one of us who will not remember, while he lives, being present at this day's festival, and the declaration made this night by the gentleman who has just left the chair. That declaration has rent the veil from the features of the Great Unknown — a name which must now merge in the name of the Great Known. It will be henceforth coupled with the name of Scott, which will become familiar like a household word. We have heard the confession from his own immortal lips — (cheering) — and we cannot dwell with too

much or too fervent praise on the merits of the greatest man whom Scotland has produced.

After which, several other toasts were given, and Mr. Robertson left the room about half past eleven. A few choice spirits, however, rallied round Captain Broadhead, of the 7th Hussars, who was called to the chair, and the festivity was prolonged till an early hour on Saturday morning.

The band of the theatre occupied the gallery, and that of the 7th Hussars the end of the room, opposite the chair, whose performances were greatly admired. It is but justice to Mr. Gibb to state that the dinner was very handsome (though slowly served in), and the wines good. The attention of the stewards was exemplary. Mr. Murray and Mr. Vandenhoff, with great good taste, attended on Sir Walter Scott's right and left, and we know that he has expressed himself much gratified by their anxious politeness and sedulity.

CHRONICLES

OF

THE CANONGATE.

CHAPTER I.

MR. CHRYSTAL CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.

Sic itur ad astra.

"THIS is the path to heaven." Such is the ancient motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, and which is inscribed, with greater or less propriety, upon all the public buildings, from the church to the pillory, in the ancient quarter of Edinburgh, which bears, or rather once bore, the same relation to the Good Town that Westminster does to London, being still possessed of the palace of the sovereign, as it formerly was dignified by the residence of the principal nobility and gentry. I may, therefore, with some propriety, put the same motto at the head of the literary undertaking by which I hope to illustrate the hitherto undistinguished name of Chrystal Croftangry.

The public may desire to know something of an author who pitches at such height his ambitious expectations. The gentle reader, therefore — for I

am much of Captain Bobadil's humour, and could to no other extend myself so far — the *gentle* reader, then, will be pleased to understand that I am a Scottish gentleman of the old school, with a fortune, temper, and person rather the worse for wear. I have known the world for these forty years, having written myself man nearly since that period — and I do not think it is much mended. But this is an opinion which I keep to myself when I am among younger folk, for I recollect, in my youth, quizzing the sexagenarians who carried back their ideas of a perfect state of society to the days of laced coats and triple ruffles, and some of them to the blood and blows of the Forty-five: Therefore I am cautious in exercising the right of censorship, which is supposed to be acquired by men arrived at, or approaching, the mysterious period of life, when the numbers of seven and nine multiplied into each other form what sages have termed the Grand Climacteric.

Of the earlier part of my life it is only necessary to say that I swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of my gown for the usual number of years during which young lairds were in my time expected to keep term — got no fees — laughed, and made others laugh — drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's, and Walker's — and ate oysters in the Covenant Close.

Becoming my own master, I flung my gown at the bar-keeper, and commenced gay man on my own account. In Edinburgh, I ran into all the expensive society which the place then afforded. When I went to my house in the shire of Lanark, I emulated to the utmost the expenses of men of large fortune, and had my hunters, my first-rate pointers, my game-cocks, and feeders. I can more easily forgive myself

for these follies than for others of a still more blamable kind, so indifferently cloaked over that my poor mother thought herself obliged to leave my habitation, and betake herself to a small inconvenient jointure-house, which she occupied till her death. I think, however, I was not exclusively to blame in this separation, and I believe my mother afterwards condemned herself for being too hasty. Thank God, the adversity which destroyed the means of continuing my dissipation restored me to the affections of my surviving parent.

My course of life could not last. I ran too fast to run long; and when I would have checked my career, I was perhaps too near the brink of the precipice. Some mishaps I prepared by my own folly, others came upon me unawares. I put my estate out to nurse to a fat man of business, who smothered the babe he should have brought back to me in health and strength, and, in dispute with this honest gentleman, I found, like a skilful general, that my position would be most judiciously assumed by taking it up near the Abbey of Holyrood.[1] It was then I first became acquainted with the quarter which my little work will, I hope, render immortal, and grew familiar with those magnificent wilds through which the Kings of Scotland once chased the dark-brown deer, but which were chiefly recommended to me in those days by their being inaccessible to those metaphysical persons whom the law of the neighbouring country terms John Doe and Richard Roe. In short, the precincts of the palace are now best known as being a place of refuge at any time from all pursuit for civil debt.

[1] Note I. — Holyrood.

Dire was the strife betwixt my quondam doer and myself, during which my motions were circumscribed, like those of some conjured demon, within a circle, which, "beginning at the northern gate of the King's Park, thence running northways, is bounded on the left by the King's garden-wall, and the gutter, or kennel, in a line wherewith it crosses the High Street to the Watergate, and, passing through the sewer, is bounded by the walls of the Tennis Court and Physic Garden, &c. It then follows the wall of the churchyard, joins the north-west wall of St. Ann's Yards, and, going east t the clack mill-house, turns southward to the turnstile in the King's Park wall, and includes the whole King's Park within the Sanctuary."

These limits, which I abridge from the accurate Maitland, once marked the Girth, or Asylum, belonging to the Abbey of Holyrood, and which, being still an appendage to the royal palace, has retained the privilege of an asylum for civil debt. One would think the space sufficiently extensive for a man to stretch his limbs in, as, besides a reasonable proportion of level ground (considering that the scene lies in Scotland), it includes within its precincts the mountain of Arthur's Seat, and the rocks and pasture land called Salisbury Crags. But yet it is inexpressible how, after a certain time had elapsed, I used to long for Sunday, which permitted me to extend my walk without limitation. During the other six days of the week I felt a sickness of heart, which, but for the speedy approach of the hebdomadal day of liberty, I could hardly have endured. I experienced the impatience of a mastiff who tugs in vain to extend the limits which his chain permits.

Day after day I walked by the side of the

kennel which divides the Sanctuary from the unprivileged part of the Canongate; and though the month was July, and the scene the Old Town of Edinburgh, I preferred it to the fresh air and verdant turf which I might have enjoyed in the King's Park, or to the cool and solemn gloom of the portico which surrounds the palace. To an indifferent person either side of the gutter would have seemed much the same — the houses equally mean, the children as ragged and dirty, the carmen as brutal, the whole forming the same picture of low life in a deserted and impoverished quarter of a large city. But to me, the gutter, or kennel, was what the brook Kedron was to Shimei; death was denounced against him should he cross it, doubtless because it was known to his wisdom who pronounced the doom, that from the time the crossing the stream was debarred, the devoted man's desire to transgress the precept would become irresistible, and he would be sure to draw down on his head the penalty which he had already justly incurred by cursing the anointed of God. For my part, all Elysium seemed opening on the other side of the kennel, and I envied the little blackguards, who, stopping the current with their little dam-dikes of mud, had a right to stand on either side of the nasty puddle which best pleased them. I was so childish as even to make an occasional excursion across, were it only for a few yards, and felt the triumph of a schoolboy, who, trespassing in an orchard, hurries back again with a fluttering sensation of joy and terror, betwixt the pleasure of having executed his purpose and the fear of being taken or discovered.

I have sometimes asked myself, what I should

have done in case of actual imprisonment, since I could not bear without impatience a restriction which is comparatively a mere trifle; but I really could never answer the question to my own satisfaction. I have all my life hated those treacherous expedients called *mezzo-termini*, and it is possible with this disposition I might have endured more patiently an absolute privation of liberty than the more modified restrictions to which my residence in the Sanctuary at this period subjected me. If, however, the feelings I then experienced were to increase in intensity according to the difference between a jail and my actual condition, I must have hanged myself, or pined to death; there could have been no other alternative.

Amongst many companions who forgot and neglected me of course, when my difficulties seemed to be inextricable, I had one true friend; and that friend was a barrister, who knew the laws of his country well, and, tracing them up to the spirit of equity and justice in which they originate, had repeatedly prevented, by his benevolent and manly exertions, the triumphs of selfish cunning over simplicity and folly. He undertook my cause, with the assistance of a solicitor of a character similar to his own. My quondam doer had ensconced himself chin-deep among legal trenches, hornworks, and covered ways; but my two protectors shelled him out of his defences, and I was at length a free man, at liberty to go or stay wheresoever my mind listed.

I left my lodgings as hastily as if it had been a pest-house; I did not even stop to receive some change that was due to me on settling with my landlady, and I saw the poor woman stand at her

door looking after my precipitate flight, and shaking her head as she wrapped the silver which she was counting for me in a separate piece of paper, apart from the store in her own moleskin purse. An honest Highlandwoman was Janet MacEvoy, and deserved a greater remuneration, had I possessed the power of bestowing it. But my eagerness of delight was too extreme to pause for explanation with Janet. On I pushed through the groups of children, of whose sports I had been so often a lazy lounging spectator. I sprang over the gutter as if it had been the fatal Styx, and I a ghost, which, eluding Pluto's authority, was making its escape from Limbo lake. My friend had difficulty to restrain me from running like a madman up the street; and in spite of his kindness and hospitality, which soothed me for a day or two, I was not quite happy until I found myself aboard of a Leith smack, and, standing down the Firth with a fair wind, might snap my fingers at the retreating outline of Arthur's Seat, to the vicinity of which I had been so long confined.

It is not my purpose to trace my future progress through life. I had extricated myself, or rather had been freed by my friends, from the brambles and thickets of the law, but, as befell the sheep in the fable, a great part of my fleece was left behind me. Something remained, however; I was in the season for exertion, and, as my good mother used to say, there was always life for living folk. Stern necessity gave my manhood that prudence which my youth was a stranger to. I faced danger, I endured fatigue, I sought foreign climates, and proved that I belonged to the nation which is proverbially patient of labour and prodigal of life. Independence, like liberty to Virgil's shepherd, came

late, but came at last, with no great affluence in its train, but bringing enough to support a decent appearance for the rest of my life, and to induce cousins to be civil, and gossips to say, "I wonder who old Croft will make his heir? He must have picked up something, and I should not be surprised if it prove more than folk think of."

My first impulse when I returned home was to rush to the house of my benefactor, the only man who had in my distress interested himself in my behalf. He was a snuff-taker, and it had been the pride of my heart to save the *ipsa corpora* of the first score of guineas I could hoard, and to have them converted into as tasteful a snuff-box as Rundell and Bridge could devise. This I had thrust for security into the breast of my waistcoat, while, impatient to transfer it to the person for whom it was destined, I hastened to his house in Brown's Square. When the front of the house became visible, a feeling of alarm checked me. I had been long absent from Scotland, my friend was some years older than I; he might have been called to the congregation of the just. I paused, and gazed on the house, as if I had hoped to form some conjecture from the outward appearance concerning the state of the family within. I know not how it was, but the lower windows being all closed and no one stirring, my sinister forebodings were rather strengthened. I regretted now that I had not made inquiry before I left the inn where I alighted from the mail-coach. But it was too late; so I hurried on, eager to know the best or the worst which I could learn.

The brass plate bearing my friend's name and designation was still on the door, and when it was

opened the old domestic appeared a good deal older, I thought, than he ought naturally to have looked, considering the period of my absence. "Is Mr. Sommerville at home?" said I, pressing forward.

"Yes, sir," said John, placing himself in opposition to my entrance, "he is at home, but" ——

"But he is not in," said I. "I remember your phrase of old, John. Come, I will step into his room, and leave a line for him."

John was obviously embarrassed by my familiarity. I was some one, he saw, whom he ought to recollect, at the same time it was evident he remembered nothing about me.

"Ay, sir, my master is in, and in his own room, but" ——

I would not hear him out, but passed before him towards the well-known apartment. A young lady came out of the room a little disturbed, as it seemed, and said, "John, what is the matter?"

"A gentleman, Miss Nelly, that insists on seeing my master."

"A very old and deeply indebted friend," said I, "that ventures to press myself on my much-respected benefactor on my return from abroad."

"Alas, sir," replied she, "my uncle would be happy to see you, but" ——

At this moment something was heard within the apartment like the falling of a plate, or glass, and immediately after my friend's voice called angrily and eagerly for his niece. She entered the room hastily, and so did I. But it was to see a spectacle compared with which that of my benefactor stretched on his bier would have been a happy one.

The easy-chair filled with cushions, the extended limbs swathed in flannel, the wide wrapping-gown

and nightcap, showed illness; but the dimmed eye, once so replete with living fire, the blabber lip, whose dilation and compression used to give such character to his animated countenance — the stammering tongue, that once poured forth such floods of masculine eloquence, and had often swayed the opinion of the sages whom he addressed — all these sad symptoms evinced that my friend was in the melancholy condition of those in whom the principle of animal life has unfortunately survived that of mental intelligence. He gazed a moment at me, but then seemed insensible of my presence, and went on — he, once the most courteous and well-bred! — to babble unintelligible but violent reproaches against his niece and servant, because he himself had dropped a tea-cup in attempting to place it on a table at his elbow. His eyes caught a momentary fire from his irritation; but he struggled in vain for words to express himself adequately, as, looking from his servant to his niece, and then to the table, he laboured to explain that they had placed it (though it touched his chair) at too great a distance from him.

The young person, who had naturally a resigned Madonna-like expression of countenance, listened to his impatient chiding with the most humble submission, checked the servant, whose less delicate feelings would have entered on his justification, and gradually, by the sweet and soft tone of her voice, soothed to rest the spirit of causeless irritation.

She then cast a look towards me, which expressed, "You see all that remains of him whom you call friend." It seemed also to say, "Your longer presence here can only be distressing to us all."

"Forgive me, young lady," I said, as well as tears

would permit; "I am a person deeply obliged to your uncle. My name is Croftangry."

"Lord! and that I should not hae minded ye, Maister Croftangry," said the servant. "Ay, I mind my master had muckle fash about your job. I hae heard him order in fresh candles as midnight chappit, and till't again. Indeed, ye had aye his gude word, Mr. Croftangry, for a' that folks said about you."

"Hold your tongue, John," said the lady, somewhat angrily; and then continued, addressing herself to me, "I am sure, sir, you must be sorry to see my uncle in this state. I know you are his friend. I have heard him mention your name, and wonder he never heard from you." A new cut this, and it went to my heart. But she continued, "I really do not know if it is right that any should — If my uncle should know you, which I scarce think possible, he would be much affected, and the doctor says that any agitation —— But here comes Dr. —— to give his own opinion."

Dr. —— entered. I had left him a middle-aged man; he was now an elderly one; but still the same benevolent Samaritan, who went about doing good, and thought the blessings of the poor as good a recompense of his professional skill as the gold of the rich.

He looked at me with surprise, but the young lady said a word of introduction, and I, who was known to the doctor formerly, hastened to complete it. He recollected me perfectly, and intimated that he was well acquainted with the reasons I had for being deeply interested in the fate of his patient. He gave me a very melancholy account of my poor friend, drawing me for that purpose a little apart

from the lady. "The light of life," he said, "was trembling in the socket; he scarcely expected it would ever leap up even into a momentary flash, but more was impossible." He then stepped towards his patient, and put some questions, to which the poor invalid, though he seemed to recognise the friendly and familiar voice, answered only in a faltering and uncertain manner.

The young lady, in her turn, had drawn back when the doctor approached his patient. "You see how it is with him," said the doctor, addressing me; "I have heard our poor friend, in one of the most eloquent of his pleadings, give a description of this very disease, which he compared to the tortures inflicted by Mezentius, when he chained the dead to the living. The soul, he said, is imprisoned in its dungeon of flesh, and, though retaining its natural and unalienable properties, can no more exert them than the captive enclosed within a prison-house can act as a free agent. Alas! to see *him*, who could so well describe what this malady was in others, a prey himself to its infirmities! I shall never forget the solemn tone of expression with which he summed up the incapacities of the paralytic — the deafened ear, the dimmed eye, the crippled limbs — in the noble words of Juvenal —

omni
Membrorum damno, major dementia, quæ nec
Nomina servorum nec vultum agnoscit amici."

As the physician repeated these lines, a flash of intelligence seemed to revive in the invalid's eye — sank again — again struggled, and he spoke more intelligibly than before, and in the tone of one eager to say something which he felt would escape him unless said instantly. "A question of death-bed, a question

of death-bed, doctor — a reduction *ex capite lecti* — Withering against Wilibus — about the *morbus sonticus*. I pleaded the cause for the pursuer — I, and — and — Why, I shall forget my own name — I, and — he that was the wittiest and the best-humoured man living" ——

The description enabled the doctor to fill up the blank, and the patient joyfully repeated the name suggested. "Ay, ay," he said, "just he — Harry — poor Harry" —— The light in his eye died away, and he sank back in his easy-chair.

"You have now seen more of our poor friend, Mr. Croftangry," said the physician, "than I dared venture to promise you; and now I must take my professional authority on me, and ask you to retire. Miss Sommerville will, I am sure, let you know if a moment should by any chance occur when her uncle can see you."

What could I do? I gave my card to the young lady, and, taking my offering from my bosom — "If my poor friend," I said, with accents as broken almost as his own, "should ask where this came from, name me; and say from the most obliged and most grateful man alive. Say, the gold of which it is composed was saved by grains at a time, and was hoarded with as much avarice as ever was a miser's: — to bring it here I have come a thousand miles, and now, alas, I find him thus!"

I laid the box on the table, and was retiring with a lingering step. The eye of the invalid was caught by it, as that of a child by a glittering toy, and with infantine impatience he faltered out inquiries of his niece. With gentle mildness she repeated again and again who I was, and why I came, &c. I was about to turn, and hasten from a scene so painful,

when the physician laid his hand on my sleeve — "Stop," he said, "there is a change."

There was indeed, and a marked one. A faint glow spread over his pallid features — they seemed to gain the look of intelligence which belongs to vitality — his eye once more kindled — his lip coloured — and, drawing himself up out of the listless posture he had hitherto maintained, he rose without assistance. The doctor and the servant ran to give him their support. He waved them aside, and they were contented to place themselves in such a position behind as might insure against accident, should his newly acquired strength decay as suddenly as it had revived.

"My dear Croftangry," he said, in the tone of kindness of other days, "I am glad to see you returned — You find me but poorly — but my little niece here and Dr. —— are very kind — God bless you, my dear friend! we shall not meet again till we meet in a better world."

I pressed his extended hand to my lips — I pressed it to my bosom — I would fain have flung myself on my knees; but the doctor, leaving the patient to the young lady and the servant, who wheeled forward his chair, and were replacing him in it, hurried me out of the room. "My dear sir," he said, "you ought to be satisfied; you have seen our poor invalid more like his former self than he has been for months, or than he may be perhaps again until all is over. The whole Faculty could not have assured such an interval — I must see whether anything can be derived from it to improve the general health — Pray, begone." The last argument hurried me from the spot, agitated by a crowd of feelings, all of them painful. (*d*)

When I had overcome the shock of this great disappointment, I renewed gradually my acquaintance with one or two old companions, who, though of infinitely less interest to my feelings than my unfortunate friend, served to relieve the pressure of actual solitude, and who were not perhaps the less open to my advances that I was a bachelor somewhat stricken in years, newly arrived from foreign parts, and certainly independent, if not wealthy.

I was considered as a tolerable subject of speculation by some, and I could not be burdensome to any: I was therefore, according to the ordinary rule of Edinburgh hospitality, a welcome guest in several respectable families; but I found no one who could replace the loss I had sustained in my best friend and benefactor. I wanted something more than mere companionship could give me, and where was I to look for it? — among the scattered remnants of those that had been my gay friends of yore? Alas!

> Many a lad I loved was dead,
> And many a lass grown old.

Besides, all community of ties between us had ceased to exist, and such of former friends as were still in the world held their life in a different tenor from what I did.

Some had become misers, and were as eager in saving sixpence as ever they had been in spending a guinea. Some had turned agriculturists — their talk was of oxen, and they were only fit companions for graziers. Some stuck to cards, and, though no longer deep gamblers, rather played small game than sat out. This I particularly despised. The strong impulse of gaming, alas! I had felt in my time — it

is as intense as it is criminal; but it produces excitation and interest, and I can conceive how it should become a passion with strong and powerful minds. But to dribble away life in exchanging bits of painted pasteboard round a green table, for the piddling concern of a few shillings, can only be excused in folly or superannuation. It is like riding on a rocking-horse, where your utmost exertion never carries you a foot forward; it is a kind of mental treadmill, where you are perpetually climbing, but can never rise an inch. From these hints, my readers will perceive I am incapacitated for one of the pleasures of old age, which, though not mentioned by Cicero, is not the least frequent resource in the present day — the club-room, and the snug hand at whist.

To return to my old companions. Some frequented public assemblies, like the ghost of Beau Nash, or any other beau of half a century back, thrust aside by tittering youth, and pitied by those of their own age. In fine, some went into devotion, as the French term it, and others, I fear, went to the devil; a few found resources in science and letters; one or two turned philosophers in a small way, peeped into microscopes, and became familiar with the fashionable experiments of the day. Some took to reading, and I was one of them.

Some grains of repulsion towards the society around me — some painful recollections of early faults and follies — some touch of displeasure with living mankind, inclined me rather to a study of antiquities, and particularly those of my own country. The reader, if I can prevail on myself to continue the present work, will probably be able to judge, in the course of it, whether I

have made any useful progress in the study of the olden times.

I owed this turn of study, in part, to the conversation of my kind man of business, Mr. Fairscribe, whom I mentioned as having seconded the efforts of my invaluable friend in bringing the cause on which my liberty and the remnant of my property depended to a favourable decision. He had given me a most kind reception on my return. He was too much engaged in his profession for me to intrude on him often, and perhaps his mind was too much trammelled with its details to permit his being willingly withdrawn from them. In short, he was not a person of my poor friend Sommerville's expanded spirit, and rather a lawyer of the ordinary class of formalists, but a most able and excellent man. When my estate was sold, he retained some of the older title-deeds, arguing, from his own feelings, that they would be of more consequence to the heir of the old family than to the new purchaser. And when I returned to Edinburgh, and found him still in the exercise of the profession to which he was an honour, he sent to my lodgings the old family bible, which lay always on my father's table, two or three other mouldy volumes, and a couple of sheep-skin bags, full of parchments and papers, whose appearance was by no means inviting.

The next time I shared Mr. Fairscribe's hospitable dinner, I failed not to return him due thanks for his kindness, which acknowledgment, indeed, I proportioned rather to the idea which I knew he entertained of the value of such things, than to the interest with which I myself regarded them. But the conversation turning on my family, who were old proprietors in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale,

gradually excited some interest in my mind; and when I retired to my solitary parlour, the first thing I did was to look for a pedigree, or sort of history of the family, or House of Croftangry, once of that Ilk, latterly of Glentanner. The discoveries which I made shall enrich the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH MR. CROFTANGRY CONTINUES HIS STORY.

> What's property, dear Swift? I see it alter
> From you to me, from me to Peter Walter.
>
> POPE.

"CROFTANGRY—Croftandrew—Croftanridge—Croftandgrey—for sa mony wise hath the name been spellit—is weel known to be ane house of grit antiquity; and it is said, that King Milcolumb, or Malcolm, being the first of our Scottish princes quha removit across the Firth of Forth, did reside and occupy ane palace at Edinburgh, and had there ane valziant man, who did him man-service, by keeping the croft, or corn-land, which was tilled for the convenience of the King's household, and was thence callit Croft-an-ri, that is to say, the King his croft; quhilk place, though now coverit with biggings, is to this day called Croftangry, and lyeth near to the royal palace. And whereas that some of those who bear this auld and honourable name may take scorn that it ariseth from the tilling of the ground, quhilk men account a slavish occupation, yet we ought to honour the pleugh and spade, seeing we all derive our being from our father Adam, whose lot it became to cultivate the earth, in respect of his fall and transgression.

"Also we have witness, as weel in holy writt as in profane history, of the honour in quhilk husbandrie

was held of old, and how prophets have been taken from the pleugh, and great captains raised up to defend their ain countries, sic as Cincinnatus, and the like, who fought not the common enemy with the less valiancy that their arms had been exercised in halding the stilts of the pleugh, and their bellicose skill in driving of yauds and owsen.

"Likewise there are sindry honourable families, quhilk are now of our native Scottish nobility, and have clombe higher up the brae of preferment than what this house of Croftangry hath done, quhilk shame not to carry in their warlike shield and insignia of dignity, the tools and implements the quhilk their first forefathers exercised in labouring the croft-rig, or, as the poet Virgilius calleth it eloquently, in subduing the soil. And no doubt this ancient house of Croftangry, while it continued to be called of that Ilk, produced many worshipful and famous patriots, of quhom I now prætermit the names; it being my purpose, if God shall spare me life for sic ane pious officium, or duty, to resume the first part of my narrative touching the house of Croftangry, when I can set down at length the evidents, and historical witness anent the facts which I shall allege, seeing that words, when they are unsupported by proofs, are like seed sown on the naked rocks, or like an house biggit on the flitting and faithless sands."

Here I stopped to draw breath; for the style of my grandsire, the inditer of this goodly matter, was rather lengthy, as our American friends say. Indeed, I reserve the rest of the piece until I can obtain admission to the Bannatyne Club,[1] when I

[1] This club, of which the Author of Waverley has the honour to be president, was instituted in February 1823, for the purpose

propose to throw off an edition, limited according to the rules of that erudite society, with a facsimile of the manuscript, emblazonry of the family arms, surrounded by their quartering, and a handsome disclamation of family pride, with *Hæc nos novimus esse nihil*, or *Vix ea nostra voco*.

In the meantime, to speak truth, I cannot but suspect that, though my worthy ancestor puffed vigorously to swell up the dignity of his family, we had never, in fact, risen above the rank of middling proprietors. The estate of Glentanner came to us by the intermarriage of my ancestor with Tib Sommeril, termed by the Southrons Sommerville,[1] a daughter of that noble house, but I fear on what my great-grandsire calls "the wrong side of the blanket." Her husband, Gilbert, was killed fighting, as the *inquisitio post mortem* has it, "*sub vexillo regis, apud prælium juxta Branxton,* LIE *Flodden-field.*"

We had our share in other national misfortunes — were forfeited, like Sir John Colville of the Dale, for following our betters to the field of Langside; and in the contentious times of the last Stuarts we were severely fined for harbouring and resetting intercommuned ministers, and narrowly escaped giving a martyr to the Calendar of the Covenant in the person of the father of our family historian. He "took the sheaf from the mare," however, as

of printing and publishing works illustrative of the history, literature, and antiquities of Scotland. It continues to prosper, and has already rescued from oblivion many curious materials of Scottish history.

[1] The ancient Norman family of the Sommervilles came into this island with William the Conqueror, and established one branch in Gloucestershire, another in Scotland. After the lapse of 700 years, the remaining possessions of these two branches were united in the person of the late Lord Sommerville, on the death of his English kinsman, the well-known author of "The Chase"

the MS. expresses it, and agreed to accept of the terms of pardon offered by government, and sign the bond, in evidence he would give no further ground of offence. My grandsire glosses over his father's backsliding as smoothly as he can, and comforts himself with ascribing his want of resolution to his unwillingness to wreck the ancient name and family, and to permit his lands and lineage to fall under a doom of forfeiture.

"And indeed," said the venerable compiler, "as, praised be God, we seldom meet in Scotland with these belly-gods and voluptuaries, whilk are unnatural enough to devour their patrimony bequeathed to them by their forbears in chambering and wantonness, so that they come, with the prodigal son, to the husks and the swine-trough; and as I have the less to dreid the existence of such unnatural Neroes in mine own family to devour the substance of their own house like brute beasts out of mere gluttonie and Epicurishnesse, so I need only warn mine descendants against over hastily meddling with the mutations in state and in religion, which have been near-hand to the bringing this poor house of Croftangry to perdition, as we have shown more than once. And albeit I would not that my successors sat still altogether when called on by their duty to Kirk and King; yet I would have them wait till stronger and walthier men than themselves were up, so that either they may have the better chance of getting through the day; or, failing of that, the conquering party having some fatter quarry to live upon, may, like gorged hawks, spare the smaller game."

There was something in this conclusion which at first reading piqued me extremely, and I was so

unnatural as to curse the whole concern, as poor, bald, pitiful trash, in which a silly old man was saying a great deal about nothing at all. Nay, my first impression was to thrust it into the fire, the rather that it reminded me, in no very flattering manner, of the loss of the family property, to which the compiler of the history was so much attached, in the very manner which he most severely reprobated. It even seemed to my aggrieved feelings that his unprescient gaze on futurity, in which he could not anticipate the folly of one of his descendants, who should throw away the whole inheritance in a few years of idle expense and folly, was meant as a personal incivility to myself, though written fifty or sixty years before I was born.

A little reflection made me ashamed of this feeling of impatience, and as I looked at the even, concise, yet tremulous hand in which the manuscript was written, I could not help thinking, according to an opinion I have heard seriously maintained, that something of a man's character may be conjectured from his handwriting. That neat but crowded and constrained small hand argued a man of a good conscience, well-regulated passions, and, to use his own phrase, an upright walk in life; but it also indicated narrowness of spirit, inveterate prejudice, and hinted at some degree of intolerance, which, though not natural to the disposition, had arisen out of a limited education. The passages from Scripture and the classics, rather profusely than happily introduced, and written in a half-text character to mark their importance, illustrated that peculiar sort of pedantry which always considers the argument as gained if secured by a quotation. Then the flourished capital letters, which ornamented the

commencement of each paragraph, and the name of his family and of his ancestors, whenever these occurred in the page, do they not express forcibly the pride and sense of importance with which the author undertook and accomplished his task? I persuaded myself the whole was so complete a portrait of the man that it would not have been a more undutiful act to have defaced his picture, or even to have disturbed his bones in his coffin, than to destroy his manuscript. I thought, for a moment, of presenting it to Mr. Fairscribe; but that confounded passage about the prodigal and swine-trough — I settled at last it was as well to lock it up in my own bureau, with the intention to look at it no more.

But I do not know how it was that the subject began to sit nearer my heart than I was aware of, and I found myself repeatedly engaged in reading descriptions of farms which were no longer mine, and boundaries which marked the property of others. A love of the *natale solum*, if Swift be right in translating these words, "family estate," began to awaken in my bosom; the recollections of my own youth adding little to it, save what was connected with field-sports. A career of pleasure is unfavourable for acquiring a taste for natural beauty, and still more so for forming associations of a sentimental kind, connecting us with the inanimate objects around us.

I had thought little about my estate, while I possessed and was wasting it, unless as affording the rude materials out of which a certain inferior race of creatures, called tenants, were bound to produce (in a greater quantity than they actually did) a certain return called rent, which was destined to

supply my expenses. This was my general view of the matter. Of particular places, I recollected that Garval Hill was a famous piece of rough upland pasture, for rearing young colts, and teaching them to throw their feet — that Minion Burn had the finest yellow trout in the country — that Seggycleugh was unequalled for woodcocks — that Bengibbert Moors afforded excellent moorfowl-shooting, and that the clear bubbling fountain called the Harper's Well was the best recipe in the world on the morning after a *hard-go* with my neighbour fox-hunters. Still these ideas recalled by degrees pictures of which I had since learned to appreciate the merit — scenes of silent loneliness, where extensive moors, undulating into wild hills, were only disturbed by the whistle of the plover or the crow of the heath-cock; wild ravines creeping up into mountains, filled with natural wood, and which, when traced downwards along the path formed by shepherds and nutters, were found gradually to enlarge and deepen, as each formed a channel to its own brook, sometimes bordered by steep banks of earth, often with the more romantic boundary of naked rocks or cliffs, crested with oak, mountain-ash, and hazel — all gratifying the eye the more that the scenery was, from the bare nature of the country around, totally unexpected.

I had recollections, too, of fair and fertile holms, or level plains, extending between the wooded banks and the bold stream of the Clyde, which, coloured like pure amber, or rather having the hue of the pebbles called Cairngorm, rushes over sheets of rock and beds of gravel, inspiring a species of awe from the few and faithless fords which it presents, and the frequency of fatal accidents, now

diminished by the number of bridges. These alluvial holms were frequently bordered by triple and quadruple rows of large trees, which gracefully marked their boundary, and dipped their long arms into the foaming stream of the river. Other places I remembered, which had been described by the old huntsman as the lodge of tremendous wild-cats, or the spot where tradition stated the mighty stag to have been brought to bay, or where heroes, whose might was now as much forgotten, were said to have been slain by surprise or in battle.

It is not to be supposed that these finished landscapes became visible before the eyes of my imagination, as the scenery of the stage is disclosed by the rising of the curtain. I have said that I had looked upon the country around me, during the hurried and dissipated period of my life, with the eyes indeed of my body, but without those of my understanding. It was piece by piece, as a child picks out its lesson, that I began to recollect the beauties of nature which had once surrounded me in the home of my forefathers. A natural taste for them must have lurked at the bottom of my heart, which awakened when I was in foreign countries, and, becoming by degrees a favourite passion, gradually turned its eyes inwards, and ransacked the neglected stores which my memory had involuntarily recorded, and when excited exerted herself to collect and to complete.

I began now to regret more bitterly than ever the having fooled away my family property, the care and improvement of which I saw might have afforded an agreeable employment for my leisure, which only went to brood on past misfortunes and increase useless repining. "Had but a single farm

been reserved, however small," said I one day to Mr. Fairscribe, "I should have had a place I could call my home, and something that I could call business."

"It might have been managed," answered Fairscribe; "and, for my part, I inclined to keep the mansion-house, mains, and some of the old family acres together; but both Mr. —— and you were of opinion that the money would be more useful."

"True, true, my good friend," said I, "I was a fool then, and did not think I could incline to be Glentanner with £200 or £300 a year, instead of Glentanner with as many thousands. I was then a haughty, pettish, ignorant, dissipated, broken-down Scottish laird; and, thinking my imaginary consequence altogether ruined, I cared not how soon, or how absolutely, I was rid of everything that recalled it to my own memory, or that of others."

"And now it is like you have changed your mind?" said Fairscribe. "Well, fortune is apt to circumduce the term upon us; but I think she may allow you to revise your condescendence."

"How do you mean, my good friend?"

"Nay," said Fairscribe, "there is ill luck in averring till one is sure of his facts. I will look back on a file of newspapers, and to-morrow you shall hear from me. Come, help yourself — I have seen you fill your glass higher."

"And shall see it again," said I, pouring out what remained of our bottle of claret; "the wine is capital, and so shall our toast be — To your fireside, my good friend. And now we shall go beg a Scots song, without foreign graces, from my little siren Miss Katie."

The next day accordingly I received a parcel from Mr. Fairscribe with a newspaper enclosed, among the advertisements of which one was marked with a cross as requiring my attention. I read to my surprise —

"DESIRABLE ESTATE FOR SALE.

"By order of the Lords of Council and Session, will be exposed to sale in the New Sessions House of Edinburgh, on Wednesday, the 25th November, 18—, all and whole the lands and barony of Glentanner, now called Castle-Treddles, lying in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale, and shire of Lanark, with the teinds, parsonage and vicarage, fishings in the Clyde, woods, mosses, moors, and pasturages," &c.

The advertisement went on to set forth the advantages of the soil, situation, natural beauties and capabilities of improvement, not forgetting its being a freehold estate, with the particular polypus capacity of being sliced up into two, three, or, with a little assistance, four freehold qualifications, and a hint that the county was likely to be eagerly contested between two great families. The upset price at which "the said lands and barony and others" were to be exposed was thirty years' purchase of the proven rental, which was about a fourth more than the property had fetched at the last sale. This, which was mentioned, I suppose, to show the improvable character of the land, would have given another some pain; but let me speak truth of myself in good as in evil — it pained not me. I was only angry that Fairscribe, who knew something generally of the extent of my funds, should have tantalised me by sending me information that my family

property was in the market, since he must have known that the price was far out of my reach.

But a letter dropped from the parcel on the floor which attracted my eye and explained the riddle. A client of Mr. Fairscribe's, a moneyed man, thought of buying Glentanner, merely as an investment of money — it was even unlikely he would ever see it; and so the price of the whole being some thousand pounds beyond what cash he had on hand, this accommodating Dives would gladly take a partner in the sale for any detached farm, and would make no objection to its including the most desirable part of the estate in point of beauty, provided the price was made adequate. Mr. Fairscribe would take care I was not imposed on in the matter, and said in his card, he believed, if I really wished to make such a purchase, I had better go out and look at the premises, advising me, at the same time, to keep a strict incognito; an advice somewhat superfluous, since I am naturally of a retired and reserved disposition.

CHAPTER III.

MR. CROFTANGRY, INTER ALIA, REVISITS GLENTANNER.

> Then sing of stage-coaches,
> And fear no reproaches
> For riding in one;
> But daily be jogging,
> Whilst, whistling and flogging,
> Whilst, whistling and flogging,
> The coachman drives on.
>
> FARQUHAR.

DISGUISED in a grey surtout which had seen service, a white castor on my head, and a stout Indian cane in my hand, the next week saw me on the top of a mail-coach driving to the westward.

I like mail-coaches, and I hate them. I like them for my convenience, but I detest them for setting the whole world a-gadding, instead of sitting quietly still minding their own business, and preserving the stamp of originality of character which nature or education may have impressed on them. Off they go, jingling against each other in the rattling vehicle till they have no more variety of stamp in them than so many smooth shillings — the same even in their Welsh wigs and greatcoats, each without more individuality than belongs to a partner of the company, as the waiter calls them, of the North coach.

Worthy Mr. Piper, best of contractors who ever furnished four frampal jades for public use, I

bless you when I set out on a journey myself; the neat coaches under your contract render the intercourse, from Johnnie Groat's House to Ladykirk and Cornhill Bridge, safe, pleasant, and cheap. But, Mr. Piper, you, who are a shrewd arithmetician, did it never occur to you to calculate how many fools' heads, which might have produced an idea or two in the year, if suffered to remain in quiet, get effectually addled by jolting to and fro in these flying chariots of yours; how many decent countrymen become conceited bumpkins after a cattle-show dinner in the capital, which they could not have attended save for your means; how many decent country parsons return critics and spouters, by way of importing the newest taste from Edinburgh? And how will your conscience answer one day for carrying so many bonny lasses to barter modesty for conceit and levity at the metropolitan Vanity Fair?

Consider, too, the low rate to which you reduce human intellect. I do not believe your habitual customers have their ideas more enlarged than one of your coach-horses. They *knows the* road, like the English postillion, and they know nothing beside. They date, like the carriers at Gadshill, from the death of John Ostler;[1] the succession of guards forms a dynasty in their eyes; coachmen are their ministers of state, and an upset is to them a greater incident than a change of administration. Their only point of interest on the road is to save the time, and see whether the coach keeps the hour. This is surely a miserable degradation of human intellect. Take my advice, my

[1] See the opening scene of the First Part of Shakspeare's "Henry IV."

good sir, and disinterestedly contrive that once or twice a quarter your most dexterous whip shall overturn a coachful of these superfluous travellers, *in terrorem* to those who, as Horace says, "delight in the dust raised by your chariots."

Your current and customary mail-coach passenger, too, gets abominably selfish, schemes successfully for the best seat, the freshest egg, the right cut of the sirloin. The mode of travelling is death to all the courtesies and kindnesses of life, and goes a great way to demoralise the character and cause it to retrograde to barbarism. You allow us excellent dinners, but only twenty minutes to eat them; and what is the consequence? Bashful beauty sits on the one side of us, timid childhood on the other; respectable yet somewhat feeble old age is placed on our front; and all require those acts of politeness which ought to put every degree upon a level at the convivial board. But have we time — we the strong and active of the party — to perform the duties of the table to the more retired and bashful, to whom these little attentions are due? The lady should be pressed to her chicken — the old man helped to his favourite and tender slice — the child to his tart. But not a fraction of a minute have we to bestow on any other person than ourselves; and the *prut-prut — tut-tut* of the guard's discordant note summons us to the coach, the weaker party having gone without their dinner, and the able-bodied and active threatened with indigestion, from having swallowed victuals like a Leicestershire clown bolting bacon.

On the memorable occasion I am speaking of I lost my breakfast, sheerly from obeying the commands of a respectable-looking old lady, who once

required me to ring the bell, and another time to help the tea-kettle. I have some reason to think she was literally an *old stayer*, who laughed in her sleeve at my complaisance; so that I have sworn in my secret soul revenge upon her sex, and all such errant damsels of whatever age and degree, whom I may encounter in my travels. I mean all this without the least ill-will to my friend the contractor, who, I think, has approached as near as any one is like to do towards accomplishing the modest wish of the Amatus and Amata of the Peri Bathous,

> Ye gods, annihilate but time and space,
> And make two lovers happy.

I intend to give Mr. P. his full revenge when I come to discuss the more recent enormity of steam-boats; meanwhile, I shall only say of both these modes of conveyance, that

> There is no living with them or without them.

I am perhaps more critical on the —— mail-coach on this particular occasion, that I did not meet all the respect from the worshipful company in his Majesty's carriage that I think I was entitled to. I must say it for myself, that I bear, in my own opinion at least, not a vulgar point about me. My face has seen service, but there is still a good set of teeth, an aquiline nose, and a quick grey eye, set a little too deep under the eyebrow; and a cue of the kind once called military may serve to show that my civil occupations have been sometimes mixed with those of war. Nevertheless, two idle young fellows in the vehicle, or rather on the top of it, were so much amused with

the deliberation which I used in ascending to the same place of eminence, that I thought I should have been obliged to pull them up a little. And I was in no good-humour, at an unsuppressed laugh following my descent, when set down at the angle, where a cross road, striking off from the main one, led me towards Glentanner, from which I was still nearly five miles distant.

It was an old-fashioned road, which, preferring ascents to sloughs, was led in a straight line over height and hollow, through moor and dale. Every object around me, as I passed them in succession, reminded me of old days, and at the same time formed the strongest contrast with them possible. Unattended, on foot, with a small bundle in my hand, deemed scarce sufficient good company for the two shabby genteels with whom I had been lately perched on the top of a mail-coach, I did not seem to be the same person with the young prodigal, who lived with the noblest and gayest in the land, and who, thirty years before, would, in the same country, have been on the back of a horse that had been victor for a plate, or smoking along in his travelling chaise-and-four. My sentiments were not less changed than my condition. I could quite well remember that my ruling sensation in the days of heady youth was a mere schoolboy's eagerness to get farthest forward in the race in which I had engaged; to drink as many bottles as ——; to be thought as good a judge of a horse as ——; to have the knowing cut of ——'s jacket. These were thy gods, O Israel!

Now I was a mere looker-on; seldom an unmoved, and sometimes an angry spectator, but still a spectator only, of the pursuits of mankind. I

felt how little my opinion was valued by those engaged in the busy turmoil, yet I exercised it with the profusion of an old lawyer retired from his profession, who thrusts himself into his neighbour's affairs, and gives advice where it is not wanted, merely under pretence of loving the crack of the whip.

I came amid these reflections to the brow of a hill, from which I expected to see Glentanner; a modest-looking yet comfortable house, its walls covered with the most productive fruit-trees in that part of the country, and screened from the most stormy quarters of the horizon by a deep and ancient wood, which overhung the neighbouring hill. The house was gone; a great part of the wood was felled; and instead of the gentlemanlike mansion, shrouded and embosomed among its old hereditary trees, stood Castle Treddles, a huge lumping four-square pile of freestone, as bare as my nail, except for a paltry edging of decayed and lingering exotics, with an impoverished lawn stretched before it, which, instead of boasting deep green tapestry, enamelled with daisies, and with crowsfoot and cowslips, showed an extent of nakedness, raked, indeed, and levelled, but where the sown grasses had failed with drought, and the earth, retaining its natural complexion, seemed nearly as brown and bare as when it was newly dug up.

The house was a large fabric, which pretended to its name of castle only from the front windows being finished in acute Gothic arches (being, by the way, the very reverse of the castellated style), and each angle graced with a turret about the size of a pepper-box. In every other respect it resembled

a large town-house, which, like a fat burgess, had taken a walk to the country on a holiday, and climbed to the top of an eminence to look around it. The bright red colour of the freestone, the size of the building, the formality of its shape, and awkwardness of its position, harmonized as ill with the sweeping Clyde in front, and the bubbling brook which danced down on the right, as the fat civic form, with bushy wig, gold-headed cane, maroon-coloured coat, and mottled silk stockings, would have accorded with the wild and magnificent scenery of Corehouse Linn.

I went up to the house. It was in that state of desertion which is perhaps the most unpleasant to look on, for the place was going to decay, without having been inhabited. There were about the mansion, though deserted, none of the slow mouldering touches of time which communicate to buildings, as to the human frame, a sort of reverence, while depriving them of beauty and of strength. The disconcerted schemes of the Laird of Castle Treddles had resembled fruit that becomes decayed without ever having ripened. Some windows broken, others patched, others blocked up with deals, gave a disconsolate air to all around, and seemed to say, "There Vanity had purposed to fix her seat, but was anticipated by Poverty."

To the inside, after many a vain summons, I was at length admitted by an old labourer. The house contained every contrivance for luxury and accommodation;—the kitchens were a model, and there were hot closets on the office staircase, that the dishes might not cool, as our Scottish phrase goes, between the kitchen and the hall. But instead of the genial smell of good cheer, these

temples of Comus emitted the damp odour of sepulchral vaults, and the large cabinets of cast-iron looked like the cages of some feudal Bastille. The eating-room and drawing-room, with an interior boudoir, were magnificent apartments, the ceilings fretted and adorned with stucco-work, which already was broken in many places, and looked in others damp and mouldering; the wood panelling was shrunk and warped and cracked; the doors, which had not been hung for more than two years, were, nevertheless, already swinging loose from their hinges. Desolation, in short, was where enjoyment had never been; and the want of all the usual means to preserve was fast performing the work of decay.

The story was a common one, and told in a few words. Mr. Treddles, senior, who bought the estate, was a cautious money-making person; his son, still embarked in commercial speculations, desired at the same time to enjoy his opulence and to increase it. He incurred great expenses, amongst which this edifice was to be numbered. To support these he speculated boldly, and unfortunately; and thus the whole history is told, which may serve for more places than Glentanner.

Strange and various feelings ran through my bosom, as I loitered in these deserted apartments, scarce hearing what my guide said to me about the size and destination of each room. The first sentiment, I am ashamed to say, was one of gratified spite. My patrician pride was pleased, that the mechanic, who had not thought the house of the Croftangrys sufficiently good for him, had now experienced a fall in his turn. My next thought was as mean, though not so malicious. "I have

had the better of this fellow," thought I; "if I lost the estate, I at least spent the price; and Mr. Treddles has lost his among paltry commercial engagements."

"Wretch!" said the secret voice within, "darest thou exult in thy shame? Recollect how thy youth and fortune were wasted in those years, and triumph not in the enjoyment of an existence which levelled thee with the beasts that perish. Bethink thee, how this poor man's vanity gave at least bread to the labourer, peasant, and citizen; and his profuse expenditure, like water spilt on the ground, refreshed the lowly herbs and plants where it fell. But thou! whom hast thou enriched, during thy career of extravagance, save those brokers of the devil, vintners, panders, gamblers, and horse-jockeys?" The anguish produced by this self-reproof was so strong that I put my hand suddenly to my forehead, and was obliged to allege a sudden megrim to my attendant, in apology for the action, and a slight groan with which it was accompanied.

I then made an effort to turn my thoughts into a more philosophical current, and muttered half aloud as a charm to lull any more painful thoughts to rest —

Nunc ager Umbreni sub nomine, nuper Ofelli
Dictus, erit nulli proprius; sed cedit in usum
Nunc mihi, nunc alii. Quocirca vivite fortes,
Fortiaque adversis opponite pectora rebus.[1]

[1] Horace, Sat. II. lib. 2. The meaning will be best conveyed to the English reader in Pope's imitation: —

What's property, dear Swift? you see it alter
From you to me, from me to Peter Walter;
Or in a mortgage prove a lawyer's share,
Or in a jointure vanish from the heir.
. . . . . .

In my anxiety to fix the philosophical precept in my mind, I recited the last line aloud, which, joined to my previous agitation, I afterwards found became the cause of a report that a mad schoolmaster had come from Edinburgh with the idea in his head of buying Castle Treddles.

As I saw my companion was desirous of getting rid of me, I asked where I was to find the person in whose hands were left the map of the estate, and other particulars connected with the sale. The agent who had this in possession, I was told, lived at the town of ——; which I was informed, and indeed knew well, was distant five miles and a bittock, which may pass in a country where they are less lavish of their land for two or three more. Being somewhat afraid of the fatigue of walking so far, I inquired if a horse or any sort of carriage was to be had, and was answered in the negative.

"But," said my cicerone, "you may halt a blink till next morning at the Treddles Arms, a very decent house, scarce a mile off."

"A new house, I suppose?" replied I.

"Na, it's a new public, but it's an auld house: it was aye the Leddy's jointure-house in the Croft-angry-folk's time; but Mr. Treddles has fitted it up for the convenience of the country. Poor man, he was a public-spirited man, when he had the means."

"Duntarkin a public-house!" I exclaimed.

"Ay," said the fellow, surprised at my naming

> Shades, that to Bacon could retreat afford,
> Become the portion of a booby lord;
> And Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,
> Slides to a scrivener and city knight.
> Let lands and houses have what lords they will,
> Let us be fix'd, and our own masters still.

the place by its former title, "ye'll hae been in this country before, I'm thinking?"

"Long since," I replied — "and there is good accommodation at the what-d'ye-call-'em arms, and a civil landlord?" This I said by way of saying something, for the man stared very hard at me.

"Very decent accommodation. Ye'll no be for fashing wi' wine, I'm thinking, and there's walth o' porter, ale, and a drap gude whisky" — (in an under tone) — "Fairntosh, if you can get on the lee-side of the gudewife — for there is nae gudeman — They ca' her Christie Steele."

I almost started at the sound. Christie Steele! Christie Steele was my mother's body servant, her very right hand, and, between ourselves, something like a viceroy over her. I recollected her perfectly; and though she had, in former times, been no favourite of mine, her name now sounded in my ear like that of a friend, and was the first word I had heard somewhat in unison with the associations around me. I sallied from Castle Treddles, determined to make the best of my way to Duntarkin, and my cicerone hung by me for a little way, giving loose to his love of talking; an opportunity which, situated as he was, the seneschal of a deserted castle, was not likely to occur frequently.

"Some folk think," said my companion, "that Mr. Treddles might as weel have put my wife as Christie Steele into the Treddles Arms, for Christie had been aye in service, and never in the public line, and so it's like she is ganging back in the world, as I hear — now, my wife had keepit a victualling office."

"That would have been an advantage, certainly," I replied.

"But I am no sure that I wad ha' looten Eppie take it, if they had put it in her offer."

"That's a different consideration."

"Ony way, I wadna ha' liked to have offended Mr. Treddles; he was a wee toustie when you rubbed him again the hair — but a kind, weel-meaning man."

I wanted to get rid of this species of chat, and, finding myself near the entrance of a footpath which made a short cut to Duntarkin, I put half-a-crown into my guide's hand, bade him good-evening, and plunged into the woods.

"Hout, sir — fie, sir — no from the like of you — stay, sir, ye wunna find the way that gate — Odd's mercy, he maun ken the gate as weel as I do mysell — weel, I wad like to ken wha the chield is."

Such were the last words of my guide's drowsy, uninteresting tone of voice; and, glad to be rid of him, I strode out stoutly, in despite of large stones, briers, and *bad steps*, which abounded in the road I had chosen. In the interim, I tried as much as I could, with verses from Horace and Prior, and all who have lauded the mixture of literary with rural life, to call back the visions of last night and this morning, imagining myself settled in some detached farm of the estate of Glentanner —

> Which sloping hills around enclose —
> Where many a birch and brown oak grows;

when I should have a cottage with a small library, a small cellar, a spare bed for a friend, and live more happy and more honoured than when I had

the whole barony. But the sight of Castle Treddles had disturbed all my own castles in the air. The realities of the matter, like a stone plashed into a limpid fountain, had destroyed the reflection of the objects around, which, till this act of violence, lay slumbering on the crystal surface, and I tried in vain to re-establish the picture which had been so rudely broken. Well, then, I would try it another way: I would try to get Christie Steele out of her *public*, since she was not thriving in it, and she who had been my mother's governante should be mine. I knew all her faults, and I told her history over to myself.

She was a granddaughter, I believe, at least some relative, of the famous Covenanter of the name, whom Dean Swift's friend, Captain Creichton, shot on his own staircase in the times of the persecutions,[1] and had perhaps derived from her native stock much both of its good and evil properties. No one could say of her that she was the life and spirit of the family, though, in my mother's time, she directed all family affairs; her look was austere and gloomy, and when she was not displeased with you you could only find it out by her silence. If there was cause for complaint, real or imaginary, Christie was loud enough. She loved my mother with the devoted attachment of a younger sister, but she was as jealous of her favour to any one else as if she had been the aged husband of a coquettish wife, and as severe in her reprehensions as an abbess over her nuns. The command which she exercised over her was that, I fear, of a strong and determined over a feeble and more nervous disposition; and though it was used

[1] Note II. — Steele, the Covenanter.

with rigour, yet, to the best of Christie Steele's belief, she was urging her mistress to her best and most becoming course, and would have died rather than have recommended any other. The attachment of this woman was limited to the family of Croftangry, for she had few relations; and a dissolute cousin, whom late in life she had taken as a husband, had long left her a widow.

To me she had ever a strong dislike. Even from my early childhood, she was jealous, strange as it may seem, of my interest in my mother's affections; she saw my foibles and vices with abhorrence, and without a grain of allowance; nor did she pardon the weakness of maternal affection, even when, by the death of two brothers, I came to be the only child of a widowed parent. At the time my disorderly conduct induced my mother to leave Glentanner, and retreat to her jointure-house, I always blamed Christie Steele for having influenced her resentment, and prevented her from listening to my vows of amendment, which at times were real and serious, and might, perhaps, have accelerated that change of disposition which has since, I trust, taken place. But Christie regarded me as altogether a doomed and predestinated child of perdition, who was sure to hold on my course, and drag downwards whosoever might attempt to afford me support.

Still, though I knew such had been Christie's prejudices against me in other days, yet I thought enough of time had since passed away to destroy all of them. I knew that when, through the disorder of my affairs, my mother underwent some temporary inconvenience about money matters, Christie, as a thing of course, stood in the gap,

and having sold a small inheritance which had descended to her, brought the purchase-money to her mistress, with a sense of devotion as deep as that which inspired the Christians of the first age, when they sold all they had, and followed the apostles of the Church. I therefore thought that we might, in old Scottish phrase, "let byganes be byganes," and begin upon a new account. Yet I resolved, like a skilful general, to reconnoitre a little before laying down any precise scheme of proceeding, and in the interim I determined to preserve my incognito.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. CROFTANGRY BIDS ADIEU TO CLYDESDALE.

> Alas, how changed from what it once had been!
> 'Twas now degraded to a common inn.
>
> GAY.

AN hour's brisk walking or thereabouts placed me in front of Duntarkin, which had also, I found, undergone considerable alterations, though it had not been altogether demolished like the principal mansion. An inn-yard extended before the door of the decent little jointure-house, even amidst the remnants of the holly hedges which had screened the lady's garden. Then a broad, raw-looking, new-made road intruded itself up the little glen, instead of the old horseway, so seldom used that it was almost entirely covered with grass. It is a great enormity of which gentlemen trustees on the highways are sometimes guilty, in adopting the breadth necessary for an avenue to the metropolis, where all that is required is an access to some sequestered and unpopulous district. I do not say anything of the expense; that the trustees and their constituents may settle as they please. But the destruction of silvan beauty is great, when the breadth of the road is more than proportioned to the vale through which it runs, and lowers of course the consequence of any objects of wood or water, or broken and varied ground, which might

otherwise attract notice and give pleasure. A bubbling runnel by the side of one of those modern Appian or Flaminian highways is but like a kennel — the little hill is diminished to a hillock — the romantic hillock to a molehill, almost too small for sight.

Such an enormity, however, had destroyed the quiet loneliness of Duntarkin, and intruded its breadth of dust and gravel, and its associations of pochays and mail-coaches, upon one of the most sequestered spots in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale. The house was old and dilapidated, and looked sorry for itself, as if sensible of a derogation; but the sign was strong and new, and brightly painted, displaying a heraldic shield, three shuttles in a field *diapré*, a web partly unfolded for crest, and two stout giants for supporters, each one holding a weaver's beam proper. To have displayed this monstrous emblem on the front of the house might have hazarded bringing down the wall, but for certain would have blocked up one or two windows. It was therefore established independent of the mansion, being displayed in an iron framework, and suspended upon two posts, with as much wood and iron about it as would have builded a brig; and there it hung, creaking, groaning, and screaming in every blast of wind, and frightening for five miles' distance, for aught I know, the nests of thrushes and linnets, the ancient denizens of the little glen.

When I entered the place I was received by Christie Steele herself, who seemed uncertain whether to drop me in the kitchen or usher me into a separate apartment. As I called for tea, with something rather more substantial than bread

and butter, and spoke of supping and sleeping, Christie at last inducted me into the room where she herself had been sitting, probably the only one which had a fire, though the month was October This answered my plan; and, as she was about to remove her spinning-wheel, I begged she would have the goodness to remain and make my tea, adding that I liked the sound of the wheel, and desired not to disturb her housewife-thrift in the least.

"I dinna ken, sir," she replied in a dry *revêche* tone, which carried me back twenty years, "I am nane of thae heartsome landleddies that can tell country cracks, and make themsells agreeable; and I was ganging to pit on a fire for you in the Red Room; but if it is your will to stay here, he that pays the lawing maun choose the lodging."

I endeavoured to engage her in conversation; but, though she answered with a kind of stiff civility, I could get her into no freedom of discourse, and she began to look at her wheel and at the door more than once, as if she meditated a retreat. I was obliged, therefore, to proceed to some special questions that might have interest for a person whose ideas were probably of a very bounded description.

I looked round the apartment, being the same in which I had last seen my poor mother. The author of the family history, formerly mentioned, had taken great credit to himself for the improvements he had made in this same jointure-house of Duntarkin, and how, upon his marriage, when his mother took possession of the same as her jointure-house, "to his great charges and expenses he caused box the walls of the great parlour" (in

which I was now sitting), "empanel the same, and plaster the roof, finishing the apartment with ane concave chimney, and decorating the same with pictures, and a barometer and thermometer." And in particular, which his good mother used to say she prized above all the rest, he had caused his own portraiture be limned over the mantelpiece by a skilful hand. And, in good faith, there he remained still, having much the visage which I was disposed to ascribe to him on the evidence of his handwriting — grim and austere, yet not without a cast of shrewdness and determination; in armour, though he never wore it, I fancy; one hand on an open book, and one resting on the hilt of his sword, though I dare say his head never ached with reading, nor his limbs with fencing.

"That picture is painted on the wood, madam," said I.

"Ay, sir, or it's like it would not have been left there; — they took a' they could."

"Mr. Treddles's creditors, you mean?" said I.

"Na," replied she, drily, "the creditors of another family, that sweep it cleaner than this poor man's, because I fancy there was less to gather."

"An older family, perhaps, and probably more remembered and regretted than later possessors?"

Christie here settled herself in her seat, and pulled her wheel towards her. I had given her something interesting for her thoughts to dwell upon, and her wheel was a mechanical accompaniment on such occasions, the revolutions of which assisted her in the explanation of her ideas.

"Mair regretted — mair missed? — I liked ane of the auld family very weel, but I winna say that for them a'. How should they be mair missed

than the Treddleses? The cotton mill was such a thing for the country! The mair bairns a cottar body had the better; they would make their awn keep frae the time they were five years auld; and a widow wi' three or four bairns was a wealthy woman in the time of the Treddleses."

"But the health of these poor children, my good friend — their education and religious instruction" ——

"For health," said Christie, looking gloomily at me, "ye maun ken little of the warld, sir, if ye dinna ken that the health of the poor man's body, as weel as his youth and his strength, are all at the command of the rich man's purse. There never was a trade so unhealthy yet, but men would fight to get wark at it for twa pennies a day aboon the common wage. But the bairns were reasonably weel cared for in the way of air and exercise, and a very responsible youth heard them their carritch, and gied them lessons in Reediemadeasy.[1] Now, what did they ever get before? Maybe on a winter day they wad be called out to beat the wood for cocks or sicklike, and then the starving weans would maybe get a bite of broken bread, and maybe no, just as the butler was in humour — that was a' they got."

"They were not, then, a very kind family to the poor, these old possessors?" said I, somewhat bitterly; for I had expected to hear my ancestors' praises recorded, though I certainly despaired of being regaled with my own.

"They werena ill to them, sir, and that is aye something. They were just decent bien bodies; — ony poor creature that had face to beg got an

[1] "Reading made Easy," usually so pronounced in Scotland.

awmous and welcome; they that were shamefaced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangrys, and, as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them, called in their kain and eat them; gaed to the kirk of a Sunday, bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on."

"These are their arms that you have on the sign?"

"What! on the painted board that is skirling and groaning at the door? — Na, these are Mr. Treddles's arms — though they look as like legs as arms — ill pleased I was at the fule thing, that cost as muckle as would hae repaired the house from the wa' stane to the rigging-tree. But if I am to bide here, I'll hae a decent board wi' a punch-bowl on it."

"Is there a doubt of your staying here, Mrs. Steele?"

"Dinna Mistress me," said the cross old woman, whose fingers were now plying their thrift in a manner which indicated nervous irritation — "there was nae luck in the land since Luckie turned Mistress, and Mistress my Leddy; and as for staying here, if it concerns you to ken, I may stay if I can pay a hundred pund sterling for the lease, and I may flit if I canna; and so gude-e'en to you, Christie" — and round went the wheel with much activity.

"And you like the trade of keeping a public-house?"

"I can scarce say that," she replied. "But worthy Mr. Prendergast is clear of its lawfulness,

and I hae gotten used to it, and made a decent living, though I never make out a fause reckoning, or give ony ane the means to disorder reason in my house."

"Indeed?" said I. "In that case, there is no wonder you have not made up the hundred pounds to purchase the lease."

"How do you ken," said she sharply, "that I might not have had a hundred punds of my ain fee? If I have it not, I am sure it is my ain faut; and I wunna ca' it faut neither, for it gaed to her wha was weel entitled to a' my service." Again she pulled stoutly at the flax, and the wheel went smartly round.

"This old gentleman," said I, fixing my eye on the painted panel, "seems to have had *his* arms painted as well as Mr. Treddles — that is, if that painting in the corner be a scutcheon."

"Ay, ay — cushion, just sae, they maun a' hae their cushions; there's sma' gentry without that; and so the arms, as they ca' them, of the House of Glentanner may be seen on an auld stane in the west end of the house. But to do them justice, they didna propale sae muckle about them as poor Mr. Treddles did; — it's like they were better used to them."

"Very likely. — Are there any of the old family in life, goodwife?"

"No," she replied; then added, after a moment's hesitation — "not that I know of" — and the wheel, which had intermitted, began again to revolve.

"Gone abroad, perhaps?" I suggested.

She now looked up, and faced me — "No, sir. There were three sons of the last laird of Glen-

tanner, as he was then called; John and William were hopeful young gentlemen, but they died early — one of a decline, brought on by the mizzles, the other lost his life in a fever. It would hae been lucky for mony ane that Chrystal had gane the same gate."

"Oh — he must have been the young spendthrift that sold the property? Well, but you should not have such an ill-will against him: remember necessity has no law; and then, goodwife, he was not more culpable than Mr. Treddles, whom you are so sorry for."

"I wish I could think sae, sir, for his mother's sake; but Mr. Treddles was in trade, and though he had no preceese right to do so, yet there was some warrant for a man being expensive that imagined he was making a mint of money. But this unhappy lad devoured his patrimony, when he kenned that he was living like a ratten in a Dunlap cheese, and diminishing his means at a' hands — I canna bide to think on't." With this she broke out into a snatch of a ballad; but little of mirth was there either in the tone or the expression: —

> "For he did spend, and make an end
> Of gear that his forefathers wan;
> Of land and ware he made him bare,
> So speak nae mair of the auld gudeman."

"Come, dame," said I, "it is a long lane that has no turning. I will not keep from you that I have heard something of this poor fellow, Chrystal Croftangry. He has sown his wild oats, as they say, and has settled into a steady respectable man."

"And wha tell'd ye that tidings?" said she, looking sharply at me.

"Not perhaps the best judge in the world of his character, for it was himself, dame."

"And if he tell'd you truth, it was a virtue he did not aye use to practise," said Christie.

"The devil!" said I, considerably nettled; "all the world held him to be a man of honour."

"Ay, ay! he would hae shot onybody wi' his pistols and his guns that had evened him to be a liar. But if he promised to pay an honest tradesman the next term-day, did he keep his word then? And if he promised a puir silly lass to make gude her shame, did he speak truth then? And what is that but being a liar, and a black-hearted deceitful liar to boot?"

My indignation was rising, but I strove to suppress it; indeed, I should only have afforded my tormentor a triumph by an angry reply. I partly suspected she began to recognise me; yet she testified so little emotion, that I could not think my suspicion well founded. I went on, therefore, to say, in a tone as indifferent as I could command, "Well, goodwife, I see you will believe no good of this Chrystal of yours, till he comes back and buys a good farm on the estate, and makes you his housekeeper."

The old woman dropped her thread, folded her hands, as she looked up to heaven with a face of apprehension. "The Lord," she exclaimed, "forbid! The Lord in his mercy forbid! Oh, sir! if you really know this unlucky man, persuade him to settle where folk ken the good that you say he has come to, and dinna ken the evil of his former days. He used to be proud enough — oh, dinna

let him come here, even for his own sake. — He used ance to have some pride."

Here she once more drew the wheel close to her, and began to pull at the flax with both hands — "Dinna let him come here, to be looked down upon by ony that may be left of his auld reiving companions, and to see the decent folk that he looked over his nose at look over their noses at him, baith at kirk and market. Dinna let him come to his ain country to be made a tale about when ony neighbour points him out to another, and tells what he is, and what he was, and how he wrecked a dainty estate, and brought harlots to the door-cheek of his father's house, till he made it nae residence for his mother; and how it had been foretauld by a servant of his ain house that he was a ne'er-do-weel, and a child of perdition, and how her words were made good, and" ——

"Stop there, goodwife, if you please," said I: "you have said as much as I can well remember, and more than it may be safe to repeat. I can use a great deal of freedom with the gentleman we speak of; but I think were any other person to carry him half of your message, I would scarce insure his personal safety. And now, as I see the night is settled to be a fine one, I will walk on to ——, where I must meet a coach to-morrow, as it passes to Edinburgh."

So saying, I paid my moderate reckoning, and took my leave, without being able to discover whether the prejudiced and hard-hearted old woman did, or did not, suspect the identity of her guest with the Chrystal Croftangry against whom she harboured so much dislike.

The night was fine and frosty, though, when I

pretended to see what its character was, it might have rained like the deluge. I only made the excuse to escape from old Christie Steele. The horses which run races in the Corso at Rome without any riders, in order to stimulate their exertion, carry each his own spurs — namely, small balls of steel, with sharp projecting spikes, which are attached to loose straps of leather, and, flying about in the violence of the agitation, keep the horse to his speed by pricking him as they strike against his flanks. The old woman's reproaches had the same effect on me, and urged me to a rapid pace, as if it had been possible to escape from my own recollections. In the best days of my life, when I won one or two hard walking-matches, I doubt if I ever walked so fast as I did betwixt the Treddles Arms and the borough town for which I was bound. Though the night was cold, I was warm enough by the time I got to my inn; and it required a refreshing draught of porter, with half an hour's repose, ere I could determine to give no further thought to Christie and her opinions than those of any other vulgar prejudiced old woman. I resolved at last to treat the thing *en bagatelle*, and, calling for writing-materials, I folded up a cheque for £100, with these lines on the envelope: —

> Chrystal, the ne'er-do-weel,
> Child destined to the deil,
> Sends this to Christie Steele.

And I was so much pleased with this new mode of viewing the subject, that I regretted the lateness of the hour prevented my finding a person to carry the letter express to its destination.

> But with the morning cool reflection came.

I considered that the money, and probably more, was actually due by me on my mother's account to Christie, who had lent it in a moment of great necessity, and that the returning it in a light or ludicrous manner was not unlikely to prevent so touchy and punctilious a person from accepting a debt which was most justly her due, and which it became me particularly to see satisfied. Sacrificing then my triad with little regret (for it looked better by candlelight, and through the medium of a pot of porter, than it did by daylight, and with bohea for a menstruum), I determined to employ Mr. Fairscribe's mediation in buying up the lease of the little inn, and conferring it upon Christie in the way which should make it most acceptable to her feelings. It is only necessary to add that my plan succeeded, and that Widow Steele even yet keeps the Treddles Arms. Do not say, therefore, that I have been disingenuous with you, reader; since, if I have not told all the ill of myself I might have done, I have indicated to you a person able and willing to supply the blank by relating all my delinquencies, as well as my misfortunes.

In the meantime, I totally abandoned the idea of redeeming any part of my paternal property, and resolved to take Christie Steele's advice, as young Norval does Glenalvon's, "although it sounded harshly."

CHAPTER V.

MR. CROFTANGRY SETTLES IN THE CANONGATE.

> If you will know my house,
> 'Tis at the tuft of olives here hard by.
>
> *As You Like It.*

By a revolution of humour which I am unable to account for, I changed my mind entirely on my plans of life, in consequence of the disappointment the history of which fills the last chapter. I began to discover that the country would not at all suit me; for I had relinquished field-sports, and felt no inclination whatever to farming, the ordinary vocation of country gentlemen; besides that, I had no talent for assisting either candidate in case of an expected election, and saw no amusement in the duties of a road trustee, a commissioner of supply, or even in the magisterial functions of the bench. I had begun to take some taste for reading; and a domiciliation in the country must remove me from the use of books, excepting the small subscription library, in which the very book which you want is uniformly sure to be engaged.

I resolved, therefore, to make the Scottish metropolis my regular resting-place, reserving to myself to take occasionally those excursions which, spite of all I have said against mail-coaches, Mr. Piper has rendered so easy. Friend of our life

and of our leisure, he secures by despatch against loss of time, and by the best of coaches, cattle, and steadiest of drivers against hazard of limb, and wafts us, as well as our letters, from Edinburgh to Cape Wrath in the penning of a paragraph.

When my mind was quite made up to make Auld Reekie my headquarters, reserving the privilege of *exploring* in all directions, I began to explore in good earnest for the purpose of discovering a suitable habitation. "And whare trew ye I gaed?" as Sir Pertinax says. Not to George's Square — nor to Charlotte Square — nor to the old New Town — nor to the new New Town — nor to the Calton Hill; I went to the Canongate, and to the very portion of the Canongate in which I had formerly been immured, like the errant knight, prisoner in some enchanted castle, where spells have made the ambient air impervious to the unhappy captive, although the organs of sight encountered no obstacle to his free passage.

Why I should have thought of pitching my tent here I cannot tell. Perhaps it was to enjoy the pleasures of freedom, where I had so long endured the bitterness of restraint; on the principle of the officer who, after he had retired from the army, ordered his servant to continue to call him at the hour of parade, simply that he might have the pleasure of saying — "D—n the parade!" and turning to the other side to enjoy his slumbers. Or perhaps I expected to find in the vicinity some little old-fashioned house, having somewhat of the *rus in urbe* which I was ambitious of enjoying. Enough, I went as aforesaid to the Canongate.

I stood by the kennel, of which I have formerly spoken, and, my mind being at ease, my bodily

organs were more delicate. I was more sensible than heretofore that, like the trade of Pompey in "Measure for Measure" — it did in some sort —— pah — an ounce of civet, good apothecary! — Turning from thence, my steps naturally directed themselves to my own humble apartment, where my little Highland landlady, as dapper and as tight as ever (for old women wear a hundred times better than the hard-wrought seniors of the masculine sex), stood at the door, *teedling* to herself a Highland song as she shook a table napkin over the forestair, and then proceeded to fold it up neatly for future service.

"How do you, Janet?"

"Thank ye, good sir," answered my old friend, without looking at me; "but ye might as weel say Mrs. MacEvoy, for she is na a'body's Shanet — umph."

"You must be *my* Janet, though, for all that — have you forgot me? — Do you not remember Chrystal Croftangry?"

The light, kind-hearted creature threw her napkin into the open door, skipped down the stair like a fairy, three steps at once, seized me by the hands — both hands — jumped up, and actually kissed me. I was a little ashamed; but what swain, of somewhere inclining to sixty, could resist the advances of a fair contemporary? So we allowed the full degree of kindness to the meeting — *honi soit qui mal y pense* — and then Janet entered instantly upon business. "An' ye'll gae in, man, and see your auld lodgings, nae doubt, and Shanet will pay ye the fifteen shillings of change that ye ran away without, and without bidding Shanet good day. But never mind" (nod-

ding good-humouredly), "Shanet saw you were carried for the time."

By this time we were in my old quarters, and Janet, with her bottle of cordial in one hand and the glass in the other, had forced on me a dram of usquebaugh, distilled with saffron and other herbs, after some old-fashioned Highland receipt. Then was unfolded, out of many a little scrap of paper, the reserved sum of fifteen shillings, which Janet had treasured for twenty years and upwards.

"Here they are," she said, in honest triumph, "just the same I was holding out to ye when ye ran as if ye had been fey. Shanet has had siller, and Shanet has wanted siller, mony a time since that — and the gauger has come, and the factor has come, and the butcher and baker — Cot bless us — just like to tear poor auld Shanet to pieces; but she took good care of Mr. Croftangry's fifteen shillings."

"But what if I had never come back, Janet?"

"Och, if Shanet had heard you were dead, she would hae gien it to the poor of the chapel, to pray for Mr. Croftangry," said Janet, crossing herself, for she was a Catholic; — "you maybe do not think it would do you cood, but the blessing of the poor can never do no harm."

I agreed heartily in Janet's conclusion; and, as to have desired her to consider the hoard as her own property would have been an indelicate return to her for the uprightness of her conduct, I requested her to dispose of it as she had proposed to do in the event of my death, that is, if she knew any poor people of merit to whom it might be useful.

"Ower mony of them," raising the corner of her

checked apron to her eyes, "e'en ower mony of them, Mr. Croftangry. — Och, ay — there is the puir Highland creatures frae Glenshee, that cam down for the harvest, and are lying wi' the fever — five shillings to them, and half-a-crown to Bessie MacEvoy, whose coodman, puir creature, died of the frost, being a shairman, for a' the whisky he could drink to keep it out o' his stamoch — and" ——

But she suddenly interrupted the bead-roll of her proposed charities, and assuming a very sage look, and primming up her little chattering mouth, she went on in a different tone — "But, och, Mr. Croftangry, bethink ye whether ye will not need a' this siller yoursell, and maybe look back and think lang for ha'en kiven it away, whilk is a creat sin to forthink a wark o' charity, and also is unlucky, and moreover is not the thought of a shentleman's son like yoursell, dear. And I say this, that ye may think a bit, for your mother's son kens that ye are no so careful as you should be of the gear, and I hae tauld ye of it before, jewel."

I assured her I could easily spare the money, without risk of future repentance; and she went on to infer that, in such a case, "Mr. Croftangry had grown a rich man in foreign parts, and was free of his troubles with messengers and sheriff-officers, and sicklike scum of the earth, and Shanet MacEvoy's mother's daughter be a blithe woman to hear it. But if Mr. Croftangry was in trouble, there was his room, and his ped, and Shanet to wait on him, and tak payment when it was quite convenient."

I explained to Janet my situation, in which she expressed unqualified delight. I then proceeded

to inquire into her own circumstances, and, though she spoke cheerfully and contentedly, I could see they were precarious. I had paid more than was due; other lodgers fell into an opposite error, and forgot to pay Janet at all. Then, Janet being ignorant of all indirect modes of screwing money out of her lodgers, others in the same line of life, who were sharper than the poor simple Highland woman, were enabled to let their apartments cheaper in appearance, though the inmates usually found them twice as dear in the long-run.

As I had already destined my old landlady to be my housekeeper and governante, knowing her honesty, good-nature, and, although a Scotswoman, her cleanliness and excellent temper (saving the short and hasty expressions of anger which Highlanders call a *fuff*), I now proposed the plan to her in such a way as was likely to make it most acceptable. Very acceptable as the proposal was, as I could plainly see, Janet, however, took a day to consider upon it; and her reflections against our next meeting had suggested only one objection, which was singular enough.

"My honour," so she now termed me, "would pe for biding in some fine street apout the town; now Shanet wad ill like to live in a place where polish, and sheriffs, and bailiffs, and sic thieves and trash of the world could tak puir shentlemen by the throat, just because they wanted a wheen dollars in the sporran. She had lived in the bonny glen of Tomanthoulick — Cot, an ony of the vermint had come there, her father wad hae wared a shot on them, and he could hit a buck within as mony measured yards as e'er a man of his clan. And the place here was so quiet frae them, they

durst na put their nose ower the gutter. Shanet owed nobody a bodle, put she couldna pide to see honest folk and pretty shentlemen forced away to prison whether they would or no; and then if Shanet was to lay her tangs ower ane of the ragamuffins' heads, it would be, maybe, that the law would gie't a hard name."

One thing I have learned in life — never to speak sense when nonsense will answer the purpose as well. I should have had great difficulty to convince this practical and disinterested admirer and vindicator of liberty that arrests seldom or never were to be seen in the streets of Edinburgh, and to satisfy her of their justice and necessity would have been as difficult as to convert her to the Protestant faith. I therefore assured her my intention, if I could get a suitable habitation, was to remain in the quarter where she at present dwelt. Janet gave three skips on the floor, and uttered as many short shrill yells of joy; yet doubt almost instantly returned, and she insisted on knowing what possible reason I could have for making my residence where few lived, save those whose misfortunes drove them thither. It occurred to me to answer her by recounting the legend of the rise of my family, and of our deriving our name from a particular place near Holyrood Palace. This, which would have appeared to most people a very absurd reason for choosing a residence, was entirely satisfactory to Janet MacEvoy.

"Och, nae doubt! if it was the land of her fathers, there was nae mair to be said. Put it was queer that her family estate should just lie at the town tail, and covered with houses, where the King's cows, Cot bless them hide and horn, used

to craze upon. It was strange changes." — She mused a little, and then added, "Put it is something better wi' Croftangry when the changes is frae the field to the habited place, and not from the place of habitation to the desert; for Shanet, her nainsell, kent a glen where there were men as weel as there maybe in Croftangry, and if there werena altogether sae mony of them, they were as good men in their tartan as the others in their broadcloth. And there were houses too, and if they were not biggit with stane and lime, and lofted like the houses at Croftangry, yet they served the purpose of them that lived there; and mony a braw bonnet, and mony a silk snood, and comely white curch, would come out to gang to kirk or chapel on the Lord's day, and little bairns toddling after; and now — Och, Och, Ohellany, Ohonari! the glen is desolate, and the braw snoods and bonnets are gane, and the Saxon's house stands dull and lonely, like the single bare-breasted rock that the falcon builds on — the falcon that drives the heath-bird frae the glen."

Janet, like many Highlanders, was full of imagination, and, when melancholy themes came upon her, expressed herself almost poetically, owing to the genius of the Celtic language in which she thought, and in which, doubtless, she would have spoken, had I understood Gaelic. In two minutes the shade of gloom and regret had passed from her good-humoured features, and she was again the little busy, prating, important old woman, undisputed owner of one flat of a small tenement in the Abbey-yard, and about to be promoted to be housekeeper to an elderly bachelor gentleman, Chrystal Croftangry, Esq.

It was not long before Janet's local researches found out exactly the sort of place I wanted, and there we settled. Janet was afraid I would not be satisfied, because it is not exactly part of Croftangry; but I stopped her doubts by assuring her it had been part and pendicle thereof in my forefathers' time, which passed very well.

I do not intend to possess any one with an exact knowledge of my lodging; though, as Bobadil says, "I care not who knows it, since the cabin is convenient." But I may state in general, that it is a house "within itself," or, according to a newer phraseology in advertisements, *self-contained*, has a garden of near half an acre, and a patch of ground with trees in front. It boasts five rooms and servants' apartments — looks in front upon the palace, and from behind towards the hill and crags of the King's Park. Fortunately the place had a name, which, with a little improvement, served to countenance the legend which I had imposed on Janet, and would not perhaps have been sorry if I had been able to impose on myself. It was called Littlecroft; we have dubbed it Little Croftangry, and the men of letters belonging to the Post Office have sanctioned the change, and deliver letters so addressed. Thus I am to all intents and purposes Chrystal Croftangry of that Ilk.

My establishment consists of Janet, an under maid-servant, and a Highland wench for Janet to exercise her Gaelic upon, with a handy lad who can lay the cloth, and take care besides of a pony, on which I find my way to Portobello sands, especially when the cavalry have a drill; for, like an old fool as I am, I have not altogether become indifferent to the tramp of horses and the flash of

weapons, of which, though no professional soldier, it has been my fate to see something in my youth. For wet mornings, I have my book — is it fine weather, I visit, or I wander on the Crags, as the humour dictates. My dinner is indeed solitary, yet not quite so neither; for though Andrew waits, Janet, or — as she is to all the world but her master, and certain old Highland gossips — Mrs. MacEvoy, attends, bustles about, and desires to see everything is in first-rate order, and to tell me, Cot pless us, the wonderful news of the Palace for the day. When the cloth is removed, and I light my cigar, and begin to husband a pint of port, or a glass of old whisky and water, it is the rule of the house that Janet takes a chair at some distance, and nods or works her stocking, as she may be disposed; ready to speak, if I am in the talking humour, and sitting quiet as a mouse if I am rather inclined to study a book or the newspaper. At six precisely she makes my tea, and leaves me to drink it; and then occurs an interval of time which most old bachelors find heavy on their hands. The theatre is a good occasional resource, especially if Will Murray acts, or a bright star of eminence shines forth; but it is distant, and so are one or two public societies to which I belong; besides, these evening walks are all incompatible with the elbow-chair feeling, which desires some employment that may divert the mind without fatiguing the body.

Under the influence of these impressions, I have sometimes thought of this literary undertaking. I must have been the Bonassus himself to have mistaken myself for a genius, yet I have leisure and reflections like my neighbours. I am a bor-

derer also between two generations, and can point out more perhaps than others of those fading traces of antiquity which are daily vanishing; and I know many a modern instance and many an old tradition, and therefore I ask —

> What ails me, I may not, as well as they,
> Rake up some threadbare tales, that mouldering lay
> In chimney corners, wont by Christmas fires
> To read and rock to sleep our ancient sires?
> No man his threshold better knows than I
> Brute's first arrival and first victory,
> Saint George's sorrel and his cross of blood,
> Arthur's round board and Caledonian wood.

No shop is so easily set up as an antiquary's. Like those of the lowest order of pawnbrokers, a commodity of rusty iron, a bag or two of hobnails, a few odd shoebuckles, cashiered kail-pots, and fire-irons declared incapable of service, are quite sufficient to set him up. If he add a sheaf or two of penny ballads and broadsides, he is a great man — an extensive trader. And then — like the pawnbrokers aforesaid, if the author understands a little legerdemain, he may, by dint of a little picking and stealing, make the inside of his shop a great deal richer than the out, and be able to show you things which cause those who do not understand the antiquarian trick of clean conveyance to wonder how the devil he came by them.

It may be said that antiquarian articles interest but few customers, and that we may bawl ourselves as rusty as the wares we deal in without any one asking the price of our merchandise. But I do not rest my hopes upon this department of my labours only. I propose also to have a corresponding shop for Sentiment, and Dialogues, and

Disquisition, which may captivate the fancy of those who have no relish, as the established phrase goes, for pure antiquity; — a sort of greengrocer's stall erected in front of my ironmongery wares, garlanding the rusty memorials of ancient times with cresses, cabbages, leeks, and water purpy.

As I have some idea that I am writing too well to be understood, I humble myself to ordinary language, and aver, with becoming modesty, that I do think myself capable of sustaining a publication of a miscellaneous nature, as like to the "Spectator," or the "Guardian," the "Mirror," or the "Lounger," as my poor abilities may be able to accomplish. Not that I have any purpose of imitating Johnson, whose general learning and power of expression I do not deny, but many of whose Ramblers are little better than a sort of pageant, where trite and obvious maxims are made to swagger in lofty and mystic language, and get some credit only because they are not easily understood. There are some of the great moralist's papers which I cannot peruse without thinking on a second-rate masquerade, where the best-known and least-esteemed characters in town march in as heroes and sultans and so forth, and, by dint of tawdry dresses, get some consideration until they are found out. — It is not, however, prudent to commence with throwing stones, just when I am striking out windows of my own.

I think even the local situation of Little Croft-angry may be considered as favourable to my undertaking. A nobler contrast there can hardly exist than that of the huge city, dark with the smoke of ages, and groaning with the various sounds of active industry or idle revel, and the

lofty and craggy hill, silent and solitary as the grave; one exhibiting the full tide of existence, pressing and precipitating itself forward with the force of an inundation; the other resembling some time-worn anchorite, whose life passes as silent and unobserved as the slender rill which escapes unheard, and scarce seen, from the fountain of his patron saint. The city resembles the busy temple, where the modern Comus and Mammon hold their court, and thousands sacrifice ease, independence, and virtue itself at their shrine; the misty and lonely mountain seems as a throne to the majestic but terrible Genius of feudal times, when the same divinities dispensed coronets and domains to those who had heads to devise, and arms to execute, bold enterprises.

I have, as it were, the two extremities of the moral world at my threshold. From the front door, a few minutes' walk brings me into the heart of a wealthy and populous city; as many paces from my opposite entrance places me in a solitude as complete as Zimmerman could have desired. Surely, with such aids to my imagination, I may write better than if I were in a lodging in the New Town or a garret in the old. As the Spaniard says, "*Viamos — Caracco!*"

I have not chosen to publish periodically, my reason for which was twofold. In the first place, I don't like to be hurried, and have had enough of duns in an early part of my life to make me reluctant to hear of or see one, even in the less awful shape of a printer's devil. But, secondly, a periodical paper is not easily extended in circulation beyond the quarter in which it is published. This work, if published in fugitive numbers,

would scarce, without a high pressure on the part of the bookseller, be raised above the Netherbow, and never could be expected to ascend to the level of Princes Street. Now I am ambitious that my compositions, though having their origin in this Valley of Holyrood, should not only be extended into those exalted regions I have mentioned, but also that they should cross the Forth, astonish the long town of Kirkcaldy, enchant the skippers and colliers of the East of Fife, venture even into the classic arcades of St. Andrews, and travel as much farther to the north as the breath of applause will carry their sails. As for a southward direction, it is not to be hoped for in my fondest dreams. I am informed that Scottish literature, like Scottish whisky, will be presently laid under a prohibitory duty. But enough of this. If any reader is dull enough not to comprehend the advantages which, in point of circulation, a compact book has over a collection of fugitive numbers, let him try the range of a gun loaded with hail-shot against that of the same piece charged with an equal weight of lead consolidated in a single bullet.

Besides, it was of less consequence that I should have published periodically, since I did not mean to solicit or accept of the contributions of friends, or the criticisms of those who may be less kindly disposed. Notwithstanding the excellent examples which might be quoted, I will establish no begging-box, either under the name of a lion's head or an ass's. What is good or ill shall be mine own, or the contribution of friends to whom I may have private access. Many of my voluntary assistants might be cleverer than myself, and

then I should have a brilliant article appear among my chiller effusions, like a patch of lace on a Scottish cloak of Galashiels grey. Some might be worse, and then I must reject them, to the injury of the feelings of the writer, or else insert them, to make my own darkness yet more opaque and palpable. "Let every herring," says our old-fashioned proverb, "hang by his own head."

One person, however, I may distinguish, as she is now no more, who, living to the utmost term of human life, honoured me with a great share of her friendship, as indeed we were blood-relatives in the Scottish sense — Heaven knows how many degrees removed — and friends in the sense of Old England. I mean the late excellent and regretted Mrs. Bethune Baliol. But as I design this admirable picture of the olden time for a principal character in my work, I will only say here, that she knew and approved of my present purpose; and though she declined to contribute to it while she lived, from a sense of dignified retirement, which she thought became her age, sex, and condition in life, she left me some materials for carrying on my proposed work, which I coveted when I heard her detail them in conversation, and which now, when I have their substance in her own handwriting, I account far more valuable than anything I have myself to offer. I hope the mentioning her name in conjunction with my own will give no offence to any of her numerous friends, as it was her own express pleasure that I should employ the manuscripts, which she did me the honour to bequeath me, in the manner in which I have now used them. It must be added, however, that in most cases I have disguised names,

and in some have added shading and colouring to bring out the narrative.

Much of my materials, besides these, are derived from friends, living or dead. The accuracy of some of these may be doubtful, in which case I shall be happy to receive, from sufficient authority, the correction of the errors which must creep into traditional documents. The object of the whole publication is, to throw some light on the manners of Scotland as they were, and to contrast them, occasionally, with those of the present day. My own opinions are in favour of our own times in many respects, but not in so far as affords means for exercising the imagination, or exciting the interest which attaches to other times. I am glad to be a writer or a reader in 1826, but I would be most interested in reading or relating what happened from half a century to a century before. We have the best of it. Scenes in which our ancestors thought deeply, acted fiercely, and died desperately, are to us tales to divert the tedium of a winter's evening, when we are engaged to no party, or beguile a summer's morning, when it is too scorching to ride or walk.

Yet I do not mean that my essays and narratives should be limited to Scotland. I pledge myself to no particular line of subjects, but, on the contrary, say with Burns,

> Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
> Perhaps turn out a sermon.

I have only to add, by way of postscript to these preliminary chapters, that I have had recourse to Molière's recipe, and read my manuscript over to my old woman, Janet MacEvoy.

The dignity of being consulted delighted Janet; and Wilkie or Allan would have made a capital sketch of her, as she sat upright in her chair, instead of her ordinary lounging posture, knitting her stocking systematically, as if she meant every twist of her thread and inclination of the wires to bear burden to the cadence of my voice. I am afraid, too, that I myself felt more delight than I ought to have done in my own composition, and read a little more oratorically than I should have ventured to do before an auditor of whose applause I was not so secure. And the result did not entirely encourage my plan of censorship. Janet did indeed seriously incline to the account of my previous life, and bestowed some Highland maledictions more emphatic than courteous on Christie Steele's reception of a "shentlemans in distress," and of her own mistress's house too. I omitted for certain reasons, or greatly abridged, what related to herself. But when I came to treat of my general views in publication, I saw poor Janet was entirely thrown out, though, like a jaded hunter, panting, puffing, and short of wind, she endeavoured at least to keep up with the chase. Or rather her perplexity made her look all the while like a deaf person ashamed of his infirmity, who does not understand a word you are saying, yet desires you to believe that he does understand you, and who is extremely jealous that you suspect his incapacity. When she saw that some remark was necessary, she resembled exactly in her criticism the devotee who pitched on the "sweet word Mesopotamia" as the most edifying note which she could bring away from a sermon. She indeed hastened to bestow general praise on what she said

was all "very fine," but chiefly dwelt on what I had said about Mr. Timmerman, as she was pleased to call the German philosopher, and supposed he must be of the same descent with the Highland clan of M'Intyre, which signifies Son of the Carpenter. "And a fery honourable name too — Shanet's own mither was a M'Intyre."

In short, it was plain the latter part of my introduction was altogether lost on poor Janet; and so, to have acted up to Molière's system, I should have cancelled the whole, and written it anew. But I do not know how it is; I retained, I suppose, some tolerable opinion of my own composition, though Janet did not comprehend it, and felt loth to retrench those Delilahs of the imagination, as Dryden calls them, the tropes and figures of which are caviare to the multitude. Besides, I hate rewriting, as much as Falstaff did paying back — it is a double labour. So I determined with myself to consult Janet, in future, only on such things as were within the limits of her comprehension, and hazard my arguments and my rhetoric on the public without her imprimatur. I am pretty sure she will "applaud it done." And in such narratives as come within her range of thought and feeling I shall, as I first intended, take the benefit of her unsophisticated judgment, and attend to it deferentially — that is, when it happens not to be in peculiar opposition to my own; for, after all, I say with Almanzor —

> Know that I alone am king of me.

The reader has now my who and my whereabout, the purpose of the work, and the circum-

stances under which it is undertaken. He has also a specimen of the author's talents, and may judge for himself, and proceed, or send back the volume to the bookseller, as his own taste shall determine.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL.

> The moon, were she earthly, no nobler.
>
> *Coriolanus.*

When we set out on the jolly voyage of life, what a brave fleet there is around us, as, stretching our fresh canvas to the breeze, all "shipshape and Bristol fashion," pennons flying, music playing, cheering each other as we pass, we are rather amused than alarmed when some awkward comrade goes right ashore for want of pilotage! — Alas! when the voyage is well spent, and we look about us, toil-worn mariners, how few of our ancient consorts still remain in sight, and they, how torn and wasted, and, like ourselves, struggling to keep as long as possible off the fatal shore, against which we are all finally drifting!

I felt this very trite but melancholy truth in all its force the other day, when a packet with a black seal arrived, containing a letter addressed to me by my late excellent friend Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, and marked with the fatal indorsation, "To be delivered according to address, after I shall be no more." A letter from her executors accompanied the packet, mentioning that they had found in her will a bequest to me of a painting of some value, which she stated would just fit the space

above my cupboard, and fifty guineas to buy a ring. And thus I separated, with all the kindness which we had maintained for many years, from a friend who, though old enough to have been the companion of my mother, was yet, in gaiety of spirits and admirable sweetness of temper, capable of being agreeable, and even animating society, for those who write themselves in the vaward of youth — an advantage which I have lost for these five-and-thirty years. The contents of the packet I had no difficulty in guessing, and have partly hinted at them in the last chapter. But to instruct the reader in the particulars, and at the same time to indulge myself with recalling the virtues and agreeable qualities of my late friend, I will give a short sketch of her manners and habits.

Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol was a person of quality and fortune, as these are esteemed in Scotland. Her family was ancient, and her connections honourable. She was not fond of specially indicating her exact age, but her juvenile recollections stretched backwards till before the eventful year 1745; and she remembered the Highland clans being in possession of the Scottish capital, though probably only as an indistinct vision. Her fortune, independent by her father's bequest, was rendered opulent by the death of more than one brave brother, who fell successively in the service of their country; so that the family estates became vested in the only surviving child of the ancient house of Bethune Baliol. My intimacy was formed with the excellent lady after this event, and when she was already something advanced in age.

She inhabited, when in Edinburgh, where she

regularly spent the winter season, one of those old hotels, which, till of late, were to be found in the neighbourhood of the Canongate, and of the Palace of Holyrood House, and which, separated from the street, now dirty and vulgar, by paved courts, and gardens of some extent, made amends for an indifferent access, by showing something of aristocratic state and seclusion, when you were once admitted within their precincts. They have pulled her house down; for, indeed, betwixt building and burning, every ancient monument of the Scottish capital is now likely to be utterly demolished. I pause on the recollections of the place, however; and since nature has denied a pencil when she placed a pen in my hand, I will endeavour to make words answer the purpose of delineation.

Baliol's Lodging, so was the mansion named, reared its high stack of chimneys, among which were seen a turret or two, and one of those small projecting platforms called bartizans, above the mean and modern buildings which line the south side of the Canongate, towards the lower end of that street, and not distant from the palace. A *porte cochère*, having a wicket for foot passengers, was, upon due occasion, unfolded by a lame old man, tall, grave, and thin, who tenanted a hovel beside the gate, and acted as porter. To this office he had been promoted by my friend's charitable feelings for an old soldier, and partly by an idea that his head, which was a very fine one, bore some resemblance to that of Garrick in the character of Lusignan. He was a man saturnine, silent, and slow in his proceedings, and would never open the *porte cochère* to a hackney coach; indicating the wicket with his finger, as the

proper passage for all who came in that obscure vehicle, which was not permitted to degrade with its ticketed presence the dignity of Baliol's Lodging. I do not think this peculiarity would have met with his lady's approbation, any more than the occasional partiality of Lusignan, or, as mortals called him, Archy Macready, to a dram. But Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, conscious that, in case of conviction, she could never have prevailed upon herself to dethrone the King of Palestine from the stone bench on which he sat for hours, knitting his stocking, refused, by accrediting the intelligence, even to put him upon his trial; well judging that he would observe more wholesome caution if he conceived his character unsuspected, than if he were detected and suffered to pass unpunished. For after all, she said, it would be cruel to dismiss an old Highland soldier for a peccadillo so appropriate to his country and profession.

The stately gate for carriages, or the humble accommodation for foot-passengers, admitted into a narrow and short passage, running between two rows of lime-trees, whose green foliage, during the spring, contrasted strangely with the swart complexion of the two walls by the side of which they grew. This access led to the front of the house, which was formed by two gable ends, notched, and having their windows adorned with heavy architectural ornaments; they joined each other at right angles; and a half-circular tower, which contained the entrance and the staircase, occupied the point of junction, and rounded the acute angle. One of other two sides of the little court, in which there was just sufficient room to turn a carriage,

was occupied by some low buildings answering the purpose of offices; the other, by a parapet surrounded by a highly ornamented iron railing, twined round with honeysuckle and other parasitical shrubs, which permitted the eye to peep into a pretty suburban garden, extending down to the road called the South Back of the Canongate, and boasting a number of old trees, many flowers, and even some fruit. We must not forget to state that the extreme cleanliness of the courtyard was such as intimated that mop and pail had done their utmost in that favoured spot to atone for the general dirt and dinginess of the quarter where the premises were situated.

Over the doorway were the arms of Bethune and Baliol, with various other devices carved in stone; the door itself was studded with iron nails, and formed of black oak; an iron rasp,[1] as it was called, was placed on it, instead of a knocker, for the purpose of summoning the attendants. He who usually appeared at the summons was a smart lad, in a handsome livery, the son of Mrs. Martha's gardener at Mount Baliol. Now and then a servant girl, nicely but plainly dressed, and fully accoutred with stockings and shoes, would perform this duty; and twice or thrice I remember being admitted by Beauffet himself, whose exterior looked as much like that of a clergyman of rank as the butler of a gentleman's family. He had been valet-de-chambre to the last Sir Richard Bethune Baliol, and was a person highly trusted by the present lady. A full stand, as it is called in Scotland, of garments of a dark colour, gold buckles in his shoes, and at the knees of his breeches, with his

[1] Note III. — Iron Rasp.

hair regularly dressed and powdered, announced him to be a domestic of trust and importance. His mistress used to say of him —

> He's sad and civil,
> And suits well for a servant with my fortunes.

As no one can escape scandal, some said that Beauffet made a rather better thing of the place than the modesty of his old-fashioned wages would, unassisted, have amounted to. But the man was always very civil to me. He had been long in the family; had enjoyed legacies, and laid by a something of his own, upon which he now enjoys ease with dignity, in as far as his newly married wife, Tibbie Shortacres, will permit him.

The Lodging — Dearest reader, if you are tired, pray pass over the next four or five pages — was not by any means so large as its external appearance led people to conjecture. The interior accommodation was much cut up by cross walls and long passages, and that neglect of economising space which characterises old Scottish architecture. But there was far more room than my old friend required, even when she had, as was often the case, four or five young cousins under her protection; and I believe much of the house was unoccupied. Mrs. Bethune Baliol never, in my presence, showed herself so much offended as once with a meddling person who advised her to have the windows of these supernumerary apartments built up, to save the tax. She said in ire, that while she lived the light of God should visit the house of her fathers, and while she had a penny king and country should have their due. Indeed, she was punctiliously loyal, even in that most staggering

test of loyalty, the payment of imposts. Mr. Beauffet told me he was ordered to offer a glass of wine to the person who collected the income tax, and that the poor man was so overcome by a reception so unwontedly generous that he had well-nigh fainted on the spot.

You entered by a matted anteroom into the eating-parlour, filled with old-fashioned furniture, and hung with family portraits, which, excepting one of Sir Bernard Bethune, in James the Sixth's time, said to be by Jameson, were exceedingly frightful. A saloon, as it was called, a long narrow chamber, led out of the dining-parlour, and served for a drawing-room. It was a pleasant apartment, looking out upon the south flank of Holyrood House, the gigantic slope of Arthur's Seat, and the girdle of lofty rocks, called Salisbury Crags[1] — objects so rudely wild that the mind can hardly conceive them to exist in the vicinage of a populous metropolis. The paintings of the saloon came from abroad, and had some of them much merit. To see the best of them, however, you must be admitted into the very penetralia of the temple, and allowed to draw the tapestry at the upper end of the saloon and enter Mrs. Martha's own special dressing-room. This was a charming apartment, of which it would be difficult to describe the form, it had so many recesses which were filled up with shelves of ebony, and cabinets of japan and *or molu;* some for holding books, of which Mrs. Martha had an admirable collection,

[1] The Rev. Mr. Bowles derives the name of these crags, as of the episcopal city in the west of England, from the same root; both, in his opinion, which he very ably defends and illustrates having been the sites of druidical temples.

some for a display of ornamental china, others for shells and similar curiosities. In a little niche, half screened by a curtain of crimson silk, was disposed a suit of tilting armour of bright steel, inlaid with silver, which had been worn on some memorable occasion by Sir Bernard Bethune, already mentioned; while over the canopy of the niche hung the broadsword with which her father had attempted to change the fortunes of Britain in 1715, and the spontoon which her elder brother bore when he was leading on a company of the Black Watch[1] at Fontenoy.

There were some Italian and Flemish pictures of admitted authenticity, a few genuine bronzes and other objects of curiosity, which her brothers or herself had picked up while abroad. In short, it was a place where the idle were tempted to become studious, the studious to grow idle — where the grave might find matter to make them gay, and the gay subjects for gravity.

That it might maintain some title to its name, I must not forget to say that the lady's dressing-room exhibited a superb mirror, framed in silver filigree work; a beautiful toilette, the cover of which was of Flanders lace; and a set of boxes corresponding in materials and work to the frame of the mirror.

This dressing apparatus, however, was mere matter of parade: Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol always went through the actual duties of the toilette in an inner apartment, which corresponded with her

[1] The well-known original designation of the gallant 42nd Regiment. Being the first corps raised for the royal service in the Highlands, and allowed to retain their national garb, they were thus named from the contrast which their dark tartans furnished to the scarlet and white of the other regiments.

sleeping-room by a small detached staircase. There were, I believe, more than one of those *turnpike stairs*, as they were called, about the house, by which the public rooms, all of which entered through each other, were accommodated with separate and independent modes of access. In the little boudoir we have described Mrs. Martha Baliol had her choicest meetings. She kept early hours; and if you went in the morning, you must not reckon that space of day as extending beyond three o'clock, or four at the utmost. These vigilant habits were attended with some restraint on her visitors, but they were indemnified by your always finding the best society and the best information which was to be had for the day in the Scottish capital. Without at all affecting the blue-stocking, she liked books — they amused her — and if the authors were persons of character, she thought she owed them a debt of civility, which she loved to discharge by personal kindness. When she gave a dinner to a small party, which she did now and then, she had the good nature to look for, and the good luck to discover, what sort of people suited each other best, and chose her company as Duke Theseus did his hounds,

> matched in mouth like bells,
> Each under each,[1]

so that every guest could take his part in the cry; instead of one mighty Tom of a fellow, like Dr. Johnson, silencing all besides by the tremendous depth of his diapason. On such occasions she afforded *chère exquise;* and every now and then there was some dish of French, or even Scottish

[1] Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," Act IV. Sc. 1.

derivation, which, as well as the numerous assortment of *vins extraordinaires* produced by Mr. Beauffet, gave a sort of antique and foreign air to the entertainment, which rendered it more interesting.

It was a great thing to be asked to such parties, and not less so to be invited to the early *conversazione*, which, in spite of fashion, by dint of the best coffee, the finest tea, and *chasse café* that would have called the dead to life, she contrived now and then to assemble in her saloon already mentioned, at the unnatural hour of eight in the evening. At such times the cheerful old lady seemed to enjoy herself so much in the happiness of her guests, that they exerted themselves in turn to prolong her amusement and their own; and a certain charm was excited around, seldom to be met with in parties of pleasure, and which was founded on the general desire of every one present to contribute something to the common amusement.

But although it was a great privilege to be admitted to wait on my excellent friend in the morning, or be invited to her dinner or evening parties, I prized still higher the right which I had acquired, by old acquaintance, of visiting Baliol's Lodging, upon the chance of finding its venerable inhabitant preparing for tea, just about six o'clock in the evening. It was only to two or three old friends that she permitted this freedom, nor was this sort of chance party ever allowed to extend itself beyond five in number. The answer to those who came later announced that the company was filled up for the evening, which had the double effect of making those who waited on Mrs. Bethune Baliol in this unceremonious manner punctual in

observing her hour, and of adding the zest of a little difficulty to the enjoyment of the party.

It more frequently happened that only one or two persons partook of this refreshment on the same evening; or, supposing the case of a single gentleman, Mrs. Martha, though she did not hesitate to admit him to her boudoir, after the privilege of the French and the old Scottish school, took care, as she used to say, to preserve all possible propriety by commanding the attendance of her principal female attendant, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, who might, from the gravity and dignity of her appearance, have sufficed to matronise a whole boarding-school, instead of one maiden lady of eighty and upwards. As the weather permitted, Mrs. Alice sat duly remote from the company in a fauteuil behind the projecting chimney-piece, or in the embrasure of a window, and prosecuted in Carthusian silence, with indefatigable zeal, a piece of embroidery, which seemed no bad emblem of eternity.

But I have neglected all this while to introduce my friend herself to the reader, at least so far as words can convey the peculiarities by which her appearance and conversation were distinguished.

A little woman, with ordinary features, and an ordinary form, and hair which in youth had no decided colour, we may believe Mrs. Martha, when she said of herself that she was never remarkable for personal charms; a modest admission, which was readily confirmed by certain old ladies, her contemporaries, who, whatever might have been the youthful advantages which they more than hinted had been formerly their own share, were now, in personal appearance, as well as in every-

thing else, far inferior to my accomplished friend. Mrs. Martha's features had been of a kind which might be said to wear well; their irregularity was now of little consequence, animated as they were by the vivacity of her conversation; her teeth were excellent, and her eyes, although inclining to grey, were lively, laughing, and undimmed by time. A slight shade of complexion, more brilliant than her years promised, subjected my friend amongst strangers to the suspicion of having stretched her foreign habits as far as the prudent touch of the rouge. But it was a calumny; for when telling or listening to an interesting and affecting story, I have seen her colour come and go as if it played on the cheek of eighteen.

Her hair, whatever its former deficiencies, was now the most beautiful white that time could bleach, and was disposed with some degree of pretension, though in the simplest manner possible, so as to appear neatly smoothed under a cap of Flanders lace, of an old-fashioned but, as I thought, of a very handsome. form, which undoubtedly has a name, and I would endeavour to recur to it, if I thought it would make my description a bit more intelligible. I think I have heard her say these favourite caps had been her mother's, and had come in fashion with a peculiar kind of wig used by the gentlemen about the time of the battle of Ramillies. The rest of her dress was always rather costly and distinguished, especially in the evening. A silk or satin gown of some colour becoming her age, and of a form which, though complying to a certain degree with the present fashion, had always a reference to some more distant period, was garnished with triple ruffles; her

shoes had diamond buckles, and were raised a little at heel, an advantage which, possessed in her youth, she alleged her size would not permit her to forego in her old age. She always wore rings, bracelets, and other ornaments of value, either for the materials or the workmanship; nay, perhaps she was a little profuse in this species of display. But she wore them as subordinate matters, to which the habits of being constantly in high life rendered her indifferent; she wore them because her rank required it, and thought no more of them as articles of finery than a gentleman dressed for dinner thinks of his clean linen and well-brushed coat, the consciousness of which embarrasses the rustic beau on a Sunday.

Now and then, however, if a gem or ornament chanced to be noticed for its beauty or singularity, the observation usually led the way to an entertaining account of the manner in which it had been acquired, or the person from whom it had descended to its present possessor. On such and similar occasions my old friend spoke willingly, which is not uncommon, but she also, which is more rare, spoke remarkably well, and had in her little narratives concerning foreign parts, or former days, which formed an interesting part of her conversation, the singular art of dismissing all the usual protracted tautology respecting time, place, and circumstances, which is apt to settle like a mist upon the cold and languid tales of age, and at the same time of bringing forward, dwelling upon, and illustrating those incidents and characters which give point and interest to the story.

She had, as we have hinted, travelled a good deal in foreign countries; for a brother, to whom

she was much attached, had been sent upon various missions of national importance to the Continent, and she had more than once embraced the opportunity of accompanying him. This furnished a great addition to the information which she could supply, especially during the last war, when the Continent was for so many years hermetically sealed against the English nation. But, besides, Mrs. Bethune Baliol visited distant countries, not in the modern fashion, when English travel in caravans together, and see in France and Italy little besides the same society which they might have enjoyed at home. On the contrary, she mingled when abroad with the natives of those countries she visited, and enjoyed at once the advantage of their society and the pleasure of comparing it with that of Britain.

In the course of her becoming habituated with foreign manners, Mrs. Bethune Baliol had, perhaps, acquired some slight tincture of them herself. Yet I was always persuaded that the peculiar vivacity of look and manner — the pointed and appropriate action with which she accompanied what she said — the use of the gold and gemmed *tabatière*, or rather I should say *bonbonnière* (for she took no snuff, and the little box contained only a few pieces of candied angelica, or some such ladylike sweetmeat), were of real old-fashioned Scottish growth, and such as might have graced the tea-table of Susannah Countess of Eglinton,[1] the patroness of Allan Ramsay, or of the Hon. Mrs. Colonel Ogilvy, who was another mirror by whom the maidens of Auld Reekie were required to dress themselves. Although well

[1] Note IV. — Countess of Eglinton.

acquainted with the customs of other countries. her manners had been chiefly formed in her own, at a time when great folk lived within little space, and when the distinguished names of the highest society gave to Edinburgh the *éclat* which we now endeavour to derive from the unbounded expense and extended circle of our pleasures.

I was more confirmed in this opinion by the peculiarity of the dialect which Mrs. Baliol used. It was Scottish, decidedly Scottish, often containing phrases and words little used in the present day. But then her tone and mode of pronunciation were as different from the usual accent of the ordinary Scotch *patois* as the accent of St. James's is from that of Billingsgate. The vowels were not pronounced much broader than in the Italian language, and there was none of the disagreeable drawl which is so offensive to Southern ears. In short, it seemed to be the Scottish as spoken by the ancient court of Scotland, to which no idea of vulgarity could be attached; and the lively manner and gestures with which it was accompanied were so completely in accord with the sound of the voice and the style of talking, that I cannot assign them a different origin. In long derivation, perhaps the manner of the Scottish court might have been originally formed on that of France, to which it had certainly some affinity; but I will live and die in the belief that those of Mrs. Baliol, as pleasing as they were peculiar, came to her by direct descent from the high dames who anciently adorned with their presence the royal halls of Holyrood.

CHAPTER VII.

MRS. BALIOL ASSISTS MR. CROFTANGRY IN HIS LITERARY SPECULATIONS.

Such as I have described Mrs. Bethune Baliol, the reader will easily believe that when I thought of the miscellaneous nature of my work, I rested upon the information she possessed, and her communicative disposition, as one of the principal supports of my enterprise. Indeed, she by no means disapproved of my proposed publication, though expressing herself very doubtful how far she could personally assist it —a doubt which might be perhaps set down to a little lady-like coquetry, which required to be sued for the boon she was not unwilling to grant. Or, perhaps, the good old lady, conscious that her unusual term of years must soon draw to a close, preferred bequeathing the materials in the shape of a legacy, to subjecting them to the judgment of a critical public during her lifetime.

Many a time I used, in our conversations of the Canongate, to resume my request of assistance, from a sense that my friend was the most valuable depository of Scottish traditions that was probably now to be found. This was a subject on which my mind was so much made up, that when I heard her carry her description of manners so far back beyond her own time, and describe how Fletcher of Salton spoke, how Graham of Claverhouse danced, what were the

jewels worn by the famous Duchess of Lauderdale and how she came by them, I could not help telling her I thought her some fairy, who cheated us by retaining the appearance of a mortal of our own day, when, in fact, she had witnessed the revolutions of centuries. She was much diverted when I required her to take some solemn oath that she had not danced at the balls given by Mary of Este, when her unhappy husband[1] occupied Holyrood in a species of honourable banishment; — or asked, whether she could not recollect Charles the Second, when he came to Scotland in 1650, and did not possess some slight recollections of the bold usurper who drove him beyond the Forth.

"*Beau cousin*," she said, laughing, "none of these do I remember personally; but you must know there has been wonderfully little change on my natural temper from youth to age. From which it follows, cousin, that being even now something too young in spirit for the years which Time has marked me in his calendar, I was, when a girl, a little too old for those of my own standing, and as much inclined at that period to keep the society of elder persons as I am now disposed to admit the company of gay young fellows of fifty or sixty like yourself, rather than collect about me all the octogenarians. Now, although I do not actually come from Elfland, and therefore cannot boast any personal knowledge of the great personages you inquire about, yet I have seen and heard those who knew them well, and who have given me as distinct an account of them as I could give you myself of the Empress Queen, or Frederick of

[1] The Duke of York, afterwards James II., frequently resided in Holyrood House, when his religion rendered him an object of suspicion to the English Parliament.

Prussia; and I will frankly add," said she, laughing and offering her *bonbonnière*, "that *I have* heard so much of the years which immediately succeeded the Revolution, that I sometimes am apt to confuse the vivid descriptions fixed on my memory by the frequent and animated recitation of others, for things which I myself have actually witnessed. I caught myself but yesterday describing to Lord M—— the riding of the last Scottish Parliament, with as much minuteness as if I had seen it, as my mother did, from the balcony in front of Lord Moray's Lodging in the Canongate."

"I am sure you must have given Lord M—— a high treat."

"I treated him to a hearty laugh, I believe," she replied; "but it is you, you vile seducer of youth, who lead me into such follies. But I will be on my guard against my own weakness. I do not well know if the wandering Jew is supposed to have a wife, but I should be sorry a decent middle-aged Scottish gentlewoman should be suspected of identity with such a supernatural person."

"For all that, I must torture you a little more, *ma belle cousine*, with my interrogatories; for how shall I ever turn author unless on the strength of the information which you have so often procured me on the ancient state of manners?"

"Stay, I cannot allow you to give your points of inquiry a name so very venerable, if I am expected to answer them. Ancient is a term for antediluvians. You may catechise me about the battle of Flodden, or ask particulars about Bruce and Wallace, under pretext of curiosity after ancient manners; and that last subject would wake my Baliol blood, you know."

"Well, but, Mrs. Baliol, suppose we settle our era: — you do not call the accession of James the Sixth to the kingdom of Britain very ancient?"

"Umph! no, cousin — I think I could tell you more of that than folk nowadays remember — for instance, that as James was trooping towards England, bag and baggage, his journey was stopped near Cockenzie by meeting the funeral of the Earl of Winton, the old and faithful servant and follower of his ill-fated mother, poor Mary! It was an ill omen for the *infare*, and so was seen of it, cousin."[1]

I did not choose to prosecute this subject, well knowing Mrs. Bethune Baliol did not like to be much pressed on the subject of the Stuarts, whose misfortunes she pitied, the rather that her father had espoused their cause. And yet her attachment to the present dynasty being very sincere, and even ardent, more especially as her family had served his late Majesty both in peace and war, she experienced a little embarrassment in reconciling her opinions respecting the exiled family with those she entertained for the present. In fact, like many an old Jacobite, she was contented to be somewhat inconsistent on the subject, comforting herself that *now* everything stood as it ought to do, and that there was no use in looking back narrowly on the right or wrong of the matter half a century ago.

"The Highlands," I suggested, "should furnish you with ample subjects of recollection. You have witnessed the complete change of that primeval country, and have seen a race not far removed from the earliest period of society melted down into the great mass of civilisation; and that could not

[1] Note V. — Earl of Winton

happen without incidents striking in themselves, and curious as chapters in the history of the human race."

"It is very true," said Mrs. Baliol; "one would think it should have struck the observers greatly, and yet it scarcely did so. For me, I was no Highlander myself, and the Highland chiefs of old, of whom I certainly knew several, had little in their manners to distinguish them from the Lowland gentry, when they mixed in society in Edinburgh, and assumed the Lowland dress. Their peculiar character was for the clansmen at home; and you must not imagine that they swaggered about in plaids and broadswords at the Cross, or came to the Assembly Rooms in bonnets and kilts."

"I remember," said I, "that Swift, in his Journal, tells Stella he had dined in the house of a Scots nobleman, with two Highland chiefs, whom he had found as well-bred men as he had ever met with."[1]

"Very likely," said my friend. "The extremes of society approach much more closely to each other than perhaps the Dean of St. Patrick's expected. The savage is always to a certain degree polite. Besides, going always armed, and having a very punctilious idea of their own gentility and consequence, they usually behaved to each other and to the Lowlanders with a good deal of formal politeness, which sometimes even procured them the character of insincerity."

"Falsehood belongs to an early period of society,

[1] Extract of Journal to Stella. — "I dined to-day (12th March 1712) with Lord Treasurer and two gentlemen of the Highlands of Scotland, yet very polite men." — Swift's *Works*, Vol. iii. p. 7, Edin. 1824.

as well as the deferential forms which we style politeness," I replied. "A child does not see the least moral beauty in truth until he has been flogged half a dozen times. It is so easy, and apparently so natural, to deny what you cannot be easily convicted of, that a savage as well as a child lies to excuse himself, almost as instinctively as he raises his hand to protect his head. The old saying 'Confess and be hanged' carries much argument in it. I observed a remark the other day in old Birrell. He mentions that M'Gregor of Glenstrae and some of his people had surrendered themselves to one of the Earls of Argyle, upon the express condition that they should be conveyed safe into England. The MacCallum More of the day kept the word of promise, but it was only to the ear. He indeed sent his captives to Berwick, where they had an airing on the other side of the Tweed, but it was under the custody of a strong guard, by whom they were brought back to Edinburgh, and delivered to the executioner. This, Birrell calls keeping a Highlandman's promise."[1]

"Well," replied Mrs. Baliol, "I might add that many of the Highland chiefs whom I knew in former days had been brought up in France, which might improve their politeness, though perhaps it did not amend their sincerity. But considering that, belonging to the depressed and defeated faction in the state, they were compelled sometimes to use dissimulation, you must set their uniform fidelity to their friends against their occasional falsehood to their enemies, and then you will not judge poor John Highlandman too severely. They were in a state of

[1] Note VI. — M'Gregor of Glenstrae.

society where bright lights are strongly contrasted with deep shadows."

"It is to that point I would bring you, *ma belle cousine* — and therefore they are most proper subjects for composition."

"And you want to turn composer, my good friend, and set my old tales to some popular tune? But there have been too many composers, if that be the word, in the field before. The Highlands *were* indeed a rich mine; but they have, I think, been fairly wrought out, as a good tune is grinded into vulgarity when it descends to the hurdy-gurdy and the barrel-organ."

"If it be really tune," I replied, "it will recover its better qualities when it gets into the hands of better artists."

"Umph!" said Mrs. Baliol, tapping her box, "we are happy in our own good opinion this evening, Mr. Croftangry. And so you think you can restore the gloss to the tartan which it has lost by being dragged through so many fingers?"

"With your assistance to procure materials, my dear lady, much, I think, may be done."

"Well — I must do my best, I suppose; though all I know about the Gael is but of little consequence — Indeed, I gathered it chiefly from Donald MacLeish."

"And who might Donald MacLeish be?"

"Neither bard nor sennachie, I assure you, nor monk nor hermit, the approved authorities for old traditions. Donald was as good a postillion as ever drove a chaise and pair between Glencroe and Inverary. I assure you, when I give you my Highland anecdotes, you will hear much of Donald MacLeish. He was Alice Lambskin's beau and mine through a long Highland tour."

"But when am I to possess these anecdotes? You answer me as Harley did poor Prior —

> Let that be done which Mat doth say.
> 'Yea,' quoth the Earl, 'but not to-day.'"

"Well, *mon beau cousin*, if you begin to remind me of my cruelty, I must remind you it has struck nine on the Abbey clock, and it is time you were going home to Little Croftangry. For my promise to assist your antiquarian researches, be assured, I will one day keep it to the utmost extent. It shall not be a Highlandman's promise, as your old citizen calls it."

I by this time suspected the purpose of my friend's procrastination; and it saddened my heart to reflect that I was not to get the information which I desired, excepting in the shape of a legacy. I found accordingly, in the packet transmitted to me after the excellent lady's death, several anecdotes respecting the Highlands, from which I have selected that which follows, chiefly on account of its possessing great power over the feelings of my critical housekeeper, Janet M'Evoy, who wept most bitterly when I read it to her.

It is, however, but a very simple tale, and may have no interest for persons beyond Janet's rank of life or understanding.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW.

CHAPTER I.

It wound as near as near could be,
But what it is she cannot tell;
On the other side it seemed to be,
Of the huge broad-breasted old oak-tree.

COLERIDGE.

MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL'S Memorandum begins thus: —

It is five-and-thirty, or perhaps nearer forty years ago, since, to relieve the dejection of spirits occasioned by a great family loss sustained two or three months before, I undertook what was called the short Highland tour. This had become in some degree fashionable; but though the military roads were excellent, yet the accommodation was so indifferent that it was reckoned a little adventure to accomplish it. Besides, the Highlands, though now as peaceable as any part of King George's dominions, was a sound which still carried terror, while so many survived who had witnessed the insurrection of 1745; and a vague idea of fear was impressed on many, as they looked from the towers of Stirling northward to the huge chain of mountains which rises like a dusky rampart to conceal in its recesses a people whose dress, manners, and language differed still very much from those of their Lowland country-

men. For my part, I come of a race not greatly subject to apprehensions arising from imagination only. I had some Highland relatives, knew several of their families of distinction; and, though only having the company of my bower-maiden, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, I went on my journey fearless.

But then I had a guide and cicerone almost equal to Greatheart in "The Pilgrim's Progress," in no less a person than Donald MacLeish, the postillion whom I hired at Stirling, with a pair of able-bodied horses, as steady as Donald himself, to drag my carriage, my duenna, and myself, wheresoever it was my pleasure to go.

Donald MacLeish was one of a race of post-boys whom, I suppose, mail-coaches and steam-boats have put out of fashion. They were to be found chiefly at Perth, Stirling, or Glasgow, where they and their horses were usually hired by travellers, or tourists, to accomplish such journeys of business or pleasure as they might have to perform in the land of the Gael. This class of persons approached to the character of what is called abroad a *conducteur;* or might be compared to the sailing-master on board a British ship of war, who follows out after his own manner the course which the captain commands him to observe. You explained to your postillion the length of your tour, and the objects you were desirous it should embrace; and you found him perfectly competent to fix the places of rest or refreshment, with due attention that those should be chosen with reference to your convenience, and to any points of interest which you might desire to visit.

The qualifications of such a person were necessarily much superior to those of the "first ready," who gallops thrice a day over the same ten miles.

Donald MacLeish, besides being quite alert at repairing all ordinary accidents to his horses and carriage, and in making shift to support them, where forage was scarce, with such substitutes as bannocks and cakes, was likewise a man of intellectual resources. He had acquired a general knowledge of the traditional stories of the country which he had traversed so often; and, if encouraged (for Donald was a man of the most decorous reserve), he would willingly point out to you the site of the principal clan-battles, and recount the most remarkable legends by which the road, and the objects which occurred in travelling it, had been distinguished. There was some originality in the man's habits of thinking and expressing himself, his turn for legendary lore strangely contrasting with a portion of the knowing shrewdness belonging to his actual occupation, which made his conversation amuse the way well enough.

Add to this, Donald knew all his peculiar duties in the country which he traversed so frequently. He could tell, to a day, when they would "be killing" lamb at Tyndrum or Glenuilt; so that the stranger would have some chance of being fed like a Christian; and knew to a mile the last village where it was possible to procure a wheaten loaf, for the guidance of those who were little familiar with the Land of Cakes. He was acquainted with the road every mile, and could tell to an inch which side of a Highland bridge was passable, which decidedly dangerous.[1] In short, Donald MacLeish

[1] This is, or was at least, a necessary accomplishment. In one of the most beautiful districts of the Highlands was, not many years since, a bridge bearing this startling caution, "Keep to the right side, the left being dangerous."

was not only our faithful attendant and steady servant, but our humble and obliging friend; and though I have known the half-classical cicerone of Italy, the talkative French *valet de place*, and even the muleteer of Spain, who piques himself on being a maize-eater, and whose honour is not to be questioned without danger, I do not think I have ever had so sensible and intelligent a guide.

Our motions were of course under Donald's direction; and it frequently happened, when the weather was serene, that we preferred halting to rest his horses even where there was no established stage, and taking our refreshment under a crag, from which leaped a waterfall, or beside the verge of a fountain enamelled with verdant turf and wild-flowers. Donald had an eye for such spots, and though he had, I dare say, never read "Gil Blas" or "Don Quixote," yet he chose such halting-places as Le Sage or Cervantes would have described. Very often, as he observed the pleasure I took in conversing with the country people, he would manage to fix our place of rest near a cottage where there was some old Gael whose broadsword had blazed at Falkirk or Preston, and who seemed the frail yet faithful record of times which had passed away. Or he would contrive to quarter us, as far as a cup of tea went, upon the hospitality of some parish minister of worth and intelligence, or some country family of the better class, who mingled with the wild simplicity of their original manners, and their ready and hospitable welcome, a sort of courtesy belonging to a people the lowest of whom are accustomed to consider themselves as being, according to the Spanish phrase, "as good gentlemen as the king, only not quite so rich."

To all such persons Donald MacLeish was well known, and his introduction passed as current as if we had brought letters from some high chief of the country.

Sometimes it happened that the Highland hospitality which welcomed us with all the variety of mountain fare, preparations of milk and eggs, and girdle-cakes of various kinds, as well as more substantial dainties, according to the inhabitant's means of regaling the passenger, descended rather too exuberantly on Donald MacLeish in the shape of mountain dew. Poor Donald! he was on such occasions like Gideon's fleece, moist with the noble element, which, of course, fell not on us. But it was his only fault, and when pressed to drink *doch-an-dorroch* to my ladyship's good health, it would have been ill taken to have refused the pledge, nor was he willing to do such discourtesy. It was, I repeat, his only fault, nor had we any great right to complain; for if it rendered him a little more talkative, it augmented his ordinary share of punctilious civility, and he only drove slower and talked longer and more pompously than when he had not come by a drop of usquebaugh. It was, we remarked, only on such occasions that Donald talked with an air of importance of the family of MacLeish; and we had no title to be scrupulous in censuring a foible the consequences of which were confined within such innocent limits.

We became so much accustomed to Donald's mode of managing us, that we observed with some interest the art which he used to produce a little agreeable surprise, by concealing from us the spot where he proposed our halt to be made, when it was of an unusual and interesting character. This

was so much his wont, that when he made apologies at setting off for being obliged to stop in some strange solitary place, till the horses should eat the corn which he brought on with them for that purpose, our imagination used to be on the stretch to guess what romantic retreat he had secretly fixed upon for our noontide baiting-place.

We had spent the greater part of the morning at the delightful village of Dalmally, and had gone upon the lake under the guidance of the excellent clergyman who was then incumbent at Glenorchy,[1] and had heard a hundred legends of the stern chiefs of Loch Awe, Duncan with the thrum bonnet, and the other lords of the now mouldering towers of Kilchurn.[2] Thus it was later than usual when we set out on our journey, after a hint or two from Donald concerning the length of the way to the next stage, as there was no good halting-place between Dalmally and Oban.

Having bid adieu to our venerable and kind cicerone, we proceeded on our tour, winding round the tremendous mountain called Cruachan Ben, which rushes down in all its majesty of rocks and wilderness on the lake, leaving only a pass, in which, notwithstanding its extreme strength, the warlike clan of MacDougal of Lorn were almost destroyed by the sagacious Robert Bruce. That king, the Wellington of his day, had accomplished, by a forced march, the unexpected manœuvre of forcing a body of troops round the other side of the mountain, and thus placed them in the flank and in the rear of the men of Lorn, whom at the same time he

[1] This venerable and hospitable gentleman's name was MacIntyre.

[2] Note VII. — Loch Awe.

attacked in front. The great number of cairns yet visible, as you descend the pass on the westward side, shows the extent of the vengeance which Bruce exhausted on his inveterate and personal enemies. I am, you know, the sister of soldiers, and it has since struck me forcibly that the manœuvre which Donald described resembled those of Wellington or of Bonaparte. He was a great man, Robert Bruce, even a Baliol must admit that; although it begins now to be allowed that his title to the crown was scarce so good as that of the unfortunate family with whom he contended — But let that pass. — The slaughter had been the greater, as the deep and rapid river Awe is disgorged from the lake, just in the rear of the fugitives, and encircles the base of the tremendous mountain; so that the retreat of the unfortunate fliers was intercepted on all sides by the inaccessible character of the country, which had seemed to promise them defence and protection.[1]

Musing, like the Irish lady in the song, "upon things which are long enough a-gone,"[2] (*e*) we felt no impatience at the slow and almost creeping pace with which our conductor proceeded along General Wade's military road, which never or rarely condescends to turn aside from the steepest ascent, but proceeds right up and down hill, with the indifference to height and hollow, steep or level, indicated by the old Roman engineers. Still, however, the substantial excellence of these great works — for such are the military highways in the Highlands —

[1] Note VIII. — Battle betwixt the Armies of the Bruce and MacDougal of Lorn.

[2] This is a line from a very pathetic ballad which I heard sung by one of the young ladies of Edgeworthstown in 1825. I do not know that it has been printed.

deserved the compliment of the poet, who, whether he came from our sister kingdom, and spoke in his own dialect, or whether he supposed those whom he addressed might have some national pretension to the second sight, produced the celebrated couplet —

> Had you but seen these roads *before* they were made,
> You would hold up your hands, and bless General Wade.

Nothing indeed can be more wonderful than to see these wildernesses penetrated and pervious in every quarter by broad accesses of the best possible construction, and so superior to what the country could have demanded for many centuries for any pacific purpose of commercial intercourse. Thus the traces of war are sometimes happily accommodated to the purposes of peace. The victories of Bonaparte have been without results; but his road over the Simplon will long be the communication betwixt peaceful countries, who will apply to the ends of commerce and friendly intercourse that gigantic work which was formed for the ambitious purpose of warlike invasion.

While we were thus stealing along, we gradually turned round the shoulder of Ben Cruachan, and, descending the course of the foaming and rapid Awe, left behind us the expanse of the majestic lake which gives birth to that impetuous river. The rocks and precipices which stooped down perpendicularly on our path on the right hand exhibited a few remains of the wood which once clothed them, but which had in latter times been felled to supply, Donald MacLeish informed us, the iron-foundries at the Bunawe. This made us fix our eyes with interest on one large oak, which grew on the left hand towards the river. It seemed a

tree of extraordinary magnitude and picturesque beauty, and stood just where there appeared to be a few roods of open ground lying among huge stones, which had rolled down from the mountain. To add to the romance of the situation, the spot of clear ground extended round the foot of a proud-browed rock, from the summit of which leaped a mountain stream in a fall of sixty feet, in which it was dissolved into foam and dew. At the bottom of the fall the rivulet with difficulty collected, like a routed general, its dispersed forces, and, as if tamed by its descent, found a noiseless passage through the heath to join the Awe.

I was much struck with the tree and waterfall, and wished myself nearer them; not that I thought of sketch-book or portfolio — for in my younger days misses were not accustomed to black-lead pencils, unless they could use them to some good purpose — but merely to indulge myself with a closer view. Donald immediately opened the chaise door, but observed it was rough walking down the brae, and that I would see the tree better by keeping the road for a hundred yards farther, when it passed closer to the spot, for which he seemed, however, to have no predilection. "He knew," he said, "a far bigger tree than that nearer Bunawe, and it was a place where there was flat ground for the carriage to stand, which it could jimply do on these braes; — but just as my leddyship liked."

My ladyship did choose rather to look at the fine tree before me than to pass it by in hopes of a finer; so we walked beside the carriage till we should come to a point from which, Donald assured us, we might, without scrambling, go as near the

tree as we chose, "though he wadna advise us to go nearer than the high-road."

There was something grave and mysterious in Donald's sun-browned countenance when he gave us this intimation, and his manner was so different from his usual frankness, that my female curiosity was set in motion. We walked on the whilst, and I found the tree, of which we had now lost sight by the intervention of some rising ground, was really more distant than I had at first supposed. "I could have sworn now," said I to my cicerone, "that yon tree and waterfall was the very place where you intended to make a stop to-day."

"The Lord forbid!" said Donald, hastily.

"And for what, Donald? Why should you be willing to pass so pleasant a spot?"

"It's ower near Dalmally, my leddy, to corn the beasts — it would bring their dinner ower near their breakfast, poor things: — an', besides, the place is not canny."

"Oh! then the mystery is out. There is a bogle or a brownie, a witch or a gyrecarlin, a bodach or a fairy, in the case?"

"The ne'er a bit, my leddy — ye are clean aff the road, as I may say. But if your leddyship will just hae patience, and wait till we are by the place and out of the glen, I'll tell ye all about it. There is no much luck in speaking of such things in the place they chanced in."

I was obliged to suspend my curiosity, observing that, if I persisted in twisting the discourse one way while Donald was twining it another, I should make his objection, like a hempen cord, just so much the tougher. At length the promised turn

of the road brought us within fifty paces of the tree which I desired to admire, and I now saw, to my surprise, that there was a human habitation among the cliffs which surrounded it. It was a hut of the least dimensions and most miserable description that I ever saw even in the Highlands. The walls of sod, or *divot*, as the Scotch call it, were not four feet high — the roof was of turf, repaired with reeds and sedges — the chimney was composed of clay, bound round by straw ropes — and the whole walls, roof and chimney, were alike covered with the vegetation of house-leek, rye-grass, and moss common to decayed cottages formed of such materials. There was not the slightest vestige of a kale-yard, the usual accompaniment of the very worst huts; and of living things we saw nothing, save a kid which was browsing on the roof of the hut, and a goat, its mother, at some distance, feeding betwixt the oak and the river Awe.

"What man," I could not help exclaiming, "can have committed sin deep enough to deserve such a miserable dwelling!"

"Sin enough," said Donald MacLeish, with a half-suppressed groan; "and God he knoweth misery enough too; — and it is no man's dwelling neither, but a woman's."

"A woman's!" I repeated, "and in so lonely a place — What sort of a woman can she be?"

"Come this way, my leddy, and you may judge that for yourself," said Donald. And by advancing a few steps, and making a sharp turn to the left, we gained a sight of the side of the great broad-breasted oak, in the direction opposed to that in which we had hitherto seen it.

"If she keeps her old wont, she will be there at this hour of the day," said Donald, but immediately became silent, and pointed with his finger, as one afraid of being overheard. I looked, and beheld, not without some sense of awe, a female form seated by the stem of the oak, with her head drooping, her hands clasped, and a dark-coloured mantle drawn over her head, exactly as Judah is represented in the Syrian medals as seated under her palm-tree. I was infected with the fear and reverence which my guide seemed to entertain towards this solitary being, nor did I think of advancing towards her to obtain a nearer view until I had cast an inquiring look on Donald; to which he replied in a half-whisper — "She has been a fearfu' bad woman, my leddy."

"Mad woman, said you," replied I, hearing him imperfectly; "then she is perhaps dangerous?"

"No — she is not mad," replied Donald; "for then it may be she would be happier than she is; though when she thinks on what she has done, and caused to be done, rather than yield up a hair-breadth of her ain wicked will, it is not likely she can be very well settled. But she neither is mad nor mischievous; and yet, my leddy, I think you had best not go nearer to her." And then, in a few hurried words, he made me acquainted with the story which I am now to tell more in detail. I heard the narrative with a mixture of horror and sympathy, which at once impelled me to approach the sufferer and speak to her the words of comfort, or rather of pity, and at the same time made me afraid to do so.

This indeed was the feeling with which she was regarded by the Highlanders in the neighbourhood,

who looked upon Elspat MacTavish, or the Woman of the Tree, as they called her, as the Greeks considered those who were pursued by the Furies, and endured the mental torment consequent on great criminal actions. They regarded such unhappy beings as Orestes and Œdipus as being less the voluntary perpetrators of their crimes than as the passive instruments by which the terrible decrees of Destiny had been accomplished; and the fear with which they beheld them was not unmingled with veneration.

I also learned further from Donald MacLeish that there was some apprehension of ill luck attending those who had the boldness to approach too near or disturb the awful solitude of a being so unutterably miserable; that it was supposed that whosoever approached her must experience in some respect the contagion of her wretchedness.

It was therefore with some reluctance that Donald saw me prepare to obtain a nearer view of the sufferer, and that he himself followed to assist me in the descent down a very rough path. I believe his regard for me conquered some ominous feelings in his own breast, which connected his duty on this occasion with the presaging fear of lame horses, lost linch-pins, overturns, and other perilous chances of the postillion's life.

I am not sure if my own courage would have carried me so close to Elspat, had he not followed. There was in her countenance the stern abstraction of hopeless and overpowering sorrow, mixed with the contending feelings of remorse, and of the pride which struggled to conceal it. She guessed, perhaps, that it was curiosity, arising out of her uncommon story, which induced me to intrude on

her solitude — and she could not be pleased that a fate like hers had been the theme of a traveller's amusement. Yet the look with which she regarded me was one of scorn instead of embarrassment. The opinion of the world and all its children could not add or take an iota from her load of misery; and, save from the half-smile that seemed to intimate the contempt of a being rapt by the very intensity of her affliction above the sphere of ordinary humanities, she seemed as indifferent to my gaze as if she had been a dead corpse or a marble statue.

Elspat was above the middle stature; her hair, now grizzled, was still profuse, and it had been of the most decided black. So were her eyes, in which, contradicting the stern and rigid features of her countenance, there shone the wild and troubled light that indicates an unsettled mind. Her hair was wrapped round a silver bodkin with some attention to neatness, and her dark mantle was disposed around her with a degree of taste, though the materials were of the most ordinary sort.

After gazing on this victim of guilt and calamity till I was ashamed to remain silent, though uncertain how I ought to address her, I began to express my surprise at her choosing such a desert and deplorable dwelling. She cut short these expressions of sympathy by answering in a stern voice, without the least change of countenance or posture, "Daughter of the stranger, he has told you my story." I was silenced at once, and felt how little all earthly accommodation must seem to the mind which had such subjects as hers for rumination. Without again attempting to open the conversation, I took a piece of gold from my purse

(for Donald had intimated she lived on alms), expecting she would at least stretch her hand to receive it. But she neither accepted nor rejected the gift — she did not even seem to notice it, though twenty times as valuable, probably, as was usually offered. I was obliged to place it on her knee, saying involuntarily, as I did so, "May God pardon you, and relieve you!" I shall never forget the look which she cast up to heaven, nor the tone in which she exclaimed, in the very words of my old friend, John Home —

"My beautiful — my brave!"

It was the language of nature, and arose from the heart of the deprived mother, as it did from that gifted imaginative poet while furnishing with appropriate expressions the ideal grief of Lady Randolph.

CHAPTER II.

Oh, I'm come to the Low Country,
Och, och, ohonochie,
Without a penny in my pouch
To buy a meal for me.
I was the proudest of my clan,
Long, long may I repine;
And Donald was the bravest man,
And Donald he was mine.

Old Song.

Elspat had enjoyed happy days, though her age had sunk into hopeless and inconsolable sorrow and distress. She was once the beautiful and happy wife of Hamish MacTavish, for whom his strength and feats of prowess had gained the title of MacTavish Mhor. His life was turbulent and dangerous, his habits being of the old Highland stamp, which esteemed it shame to want anything that could be had for the taking. Those in the Lowland line who lay near him, and desired to enjoy their lives and property in quiet, were contented to pay him a small composition, in name of protection money, and comforted themselves with the old proverb that it was better to "fleech the de'il than fight him." Others, who accounted such composition dishonourable, were often surprised by MacTavish Mhor and his associates and followers, who usually inflicted an adequate penalty, either in person or property, or both. The creagh is yet remembered in which he swept one

hundred and fifty cows from Monteith in one drove; and how he placed the Laird of Ballybught naked in a slough, for having threatened to send for a party of the Highland Watch to protect his property.

Whatever were occasionally the triumphs of this daring cateran, they were often exchanged for reverses; and his narrow escapes, rapid flights, and the ingenious stratagems with which he extricated himself from imminent danger, were no less remembered and admired than the exploits in which he had been successful. In weal or woe, through every species of fatigue, difficulty, and danger, Elspat was his faithful companion. She enjoyed with him the fits of occasional prosperity; and when adversity pressed them hard, her strength of mind, readiness of wit, and courageous endurance of danger and toil are said often to have stimulated the exertions of her husband.

Their morality was of the old Highland cast, faithful friends and fierce enemies: the Lowland herds and harvests they accounted their own, whenever they had the means of driving off the one or of seizing upon the other; nor did the least scruple on the right of property interfere on such occasions. Hamish Mhor argued like the old Cretan warrior:—

> My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
> They make me lord of all below;
> For he who dreads the lance to wield,
> Before my shaggy shield must bow.
> His lands, his vineyards, must resign,
> And all that cowards have is mine.

But those days of perilous though frequently successful depredation began to be abridged, after

the failure of the expedition of Prince Charles Edward. MacTavish Mhor had not sat still on that occasion, and he was outlawed, both as a traitor to the State and as a robber and cateran. Garrisons were now settled in many places where a redcoat had never before been seen, and the Saxon war-drum resounded among the most hidden recesses of the Highland mountains. The fate of MacTavish became every day more inevitable; and it was the more difficult for him to make his exertions for defence or escape, that Elspat, amid his evil days, had increased his family with an infant child, which was a considerable incumbrance upon the necessary rapidity of their motions.

At length the fatal day arrived. In a strong pass on the skirts of Ben Cruachan, the celebrated MacTavish Mhor was surprised by a detachment of the Sidier Roy.[1] His wife assisted him heroically, charging his piece from time to time; and, as they were in possession of a post that was nearly unassailable, he might have perhaps escaped if his ammunition had lasted. But at length his balls were expended, although it was not until he had fired off most of the silver buttons from his waistcoat, and the soldiers, no longer deterred by fear of the unerring marksman, who had slain three, and wounded more of their number, approached his stronghold, and, unable to take him alive, slew him, after a most desperate resistance.

All this Elspat witnessed and survived, for she had, in the child which relied on her for support, a motive for strength and exertion. In what manner she maintained herself it is not easy to say. Her only ostensible means of support were a flock

[1] The Red Soldier.

of three or four goats, which she fed wherever she pleased on the mountain pastures, no one challenging the intrusion. In the general distress of the country, her ancient acquaintances had little to bestow; but what they could part with from their own necessities they willingly devoted to the relief of others. From Lowlanders she sometimes demanded tribute rather than requested alms. She had not forgotten she was the widow of MacTavish Mhor, or that the child who trotted by her knee might, such were her imaginations, emulate one day the fame of his father, and command the same influence which he had once exerted without control. She associated so little with others, went so seldom and so unwillingly from the wildest recesses of the mountains, where she usually dwelt with her goats, that she was quite unconscious of the great change which had taken place in the country around her, the substitution of civil order for military violence, and the strength gained by the law and its adherents over those who were called in Gaelic song "the stormy sons of the sword." Her own diminished consequence and straitened circumstances she indeed felt, but for this the death of MacTavish Mhor was, in her apprehension, a sufficing reason; and she doubted not that she should rise to her former state of importance, when Hamish Bean (or Fair-haired James) should be able to wield the arms of his father. If, then, Elspat was repelled rudely when she demanded anything necessary for her wants, or the accommodation of her little flock, by a churlish farmer, her threats of vengeance, obscurely expressed, yet terrible in their tenor, used frequently to extort, through fear of her maledictions,

the relief which was denied to her necessities; and the trembling goodwife who gave meal or money to the widow of MacTavish Mhor wished in her heart that the stern old carline had been burnt on the day her husband had his due.

Years thus ran on, and Hamish Bean grew up, not indeed to be of his father's size or strength, but to become an active, high-spirited, fair-haired youth, with a ruddy cheek, an eye like an eagle, and all the agility, if not all the strength, of his formidable father, upon whose history and achievements his mother dwelt, in order to form her son's mind to a similar course of adventures. But the young see the present state of this changeful world more keenly than the old. Much attached to his mother, and disposed to do all in his power for her support, Hamish yet perceived, when he mixed with the world, that the trade of the cateran was now alike dangerous and discreditable, and that if he were to emulate his father's prowess it must be in some other line of warfare more consonant to the opinions of the present day.

As the faculties of mind and body began to expand, he became more sensible of the precarious nature of his situation, of the erroneous views of his mother, and her ignorance respecting the changes of the society with which she mingled so little. In visiting friends and neighbours he became aware of the extremely reduced scale to which his parent was limited, and learned that she possessed little or nothing more than the absolute necessaries of life, and that these were sometimes on the point of failing. At times his success in fishing and the chase was able to add something to her subsistence; but he saw no regular means

of contributing to her support, unless by stooping to servile labour, which, if he himself could have endured it, would, he knew, have been like a death's-wound to the pride of his mother.

Elspat, meanwhile, saw with surprise that Hamish Bean, although now tall and fit for the field, showed no disposition to enter on his father's scene of action. There was something of the mother at her heart which prevented her from urging him in plain terms to take the field as a cateran, for the fear occurred of the perils into which the trade must conduct him; and, when she would have spoken to him on the subject, it seemed to her heated imagination as if the ghost of her husband arose between them in his bloody tartans, and, laying his finger on his lips, appeared to prohibit the topic. Yet she wondered at what seemed his want of spirit, sighed as she saw him from day to day lounging about in the long-skirted Lowland coat which the legislature had imposed upon the Gael instead of their own romantic garb, and thought how much nearer he would have resembled her husband had he been clad in the belted plaid and short hose, with his polished arms gleaming at his side.

Besides these subjects for anxiety, Elspat had others arising from the engrossing impetuosity of her temper. Her love of MacTavish Mhor had been qualified by respect and sometimes even by fear; for the cateran was not the species of man who submits to female government; but over his son she had exerted, at first during childhood, and afterwards in early youth, an imperious authority, which gave her maternal love a character of jealousy. She could not bear, when Hamish,

with advancing life, made repeated steps towards independence, absented himself from her cottage at such season and for such length of time as he chose, and seemed to consider, although maintaining towards her every possible degree of respect and kindness, that the control and responsibility of his actions rested on himself alone. This would have been of little consequence, could she have concealed her feelings within her own bosom; but the ardour and impatience of her passions made her frequently show her son that she conceived herself neglected and ill used. When he was absent for any length of time from her cottage, without giving intimation of his purpose, her resentment on his return used to be so unreasonable that it naturally suggested to a young man fond of independence, and desirous to amend his situation in the world, to leave her, even for the very purpose of enabling him to provide for the parent whose egotistical demands on his filial attention tended to confine him to a desert in which both were starving in hopeless and helpless indigence.

Upon one occasion, the son having been guilty of some independent excursion, by which the mother felt herself affronted and disobliged, she had been more than usually violent on his return, and awakened in Hamish a sense of displeasure, which clouded his brow and cheek. At length, as she persevered in her unreasonable resentment, his patience became exhausted, and taking his gun from the chimney corner, and muttering to himself the reply which his respect for his mother prevented him from speaking aloud, he was about to leave the hut which he had but barely entered.

"Hamish," said his mother, "are you again

about to leave me?" But Hamish only replied by looking at and rubbing the lock of his gun.

"Ay, rub the lock of your gun," said his parent, bitterly. "I am glad you have courage enough to fire it, though it be but at a roe-deer." Hamish started at this undeserved taunt, and cast a look of anger at her in reply. She saw that she had found the means of giving him pain.

"Yes," she said, "look fierce as you will at an old woman, and your mother; it would be long ere you bent your brow on the angry countenance of a bearded man."

"Be silent, mother, or speak of what you understand," said Hamish, much irritated, "and that is of the distaff and the spindle."

"And was it of spindle and distaff that I was thinking when I bore you away on my back through the fire of six of the Saxon soldiers, and you a wailing child? I tell you, Hamish, I know a hundredfold more of swords and guns than ever you will; and you will never learn so much of noble war by yourself as you have seen when you were wrapped up in my plaid."

"You are determined at least to allow me no peace at home, mother, but this shall have an end," said Hamish, as, resuming his purpose of leaving the hut, he rose and went towards the door.

"Stay, I command you," said his mother; "stay! or may the gun you carry be the means of your ruin — may the road you are going be the track of your funeral!"

"What makes you use such words, mother?" said the young man, turning a little back. "They are not good, and good cannot come of them.

Farewell just now, we are too angry to speak together — farewell; it will be long ere you see me again." And he departed, his mother, in the first burst of her impatience, showering after him her maledictions, and in the next invoking them on her own head, so that they might spare her son's. She passed that day and the next in all the vehemence of impotent and yet unrestrained passion, now entreating Heaven, and such powers as were familiar to her by rude tradition, to restore her dear son, "the calf of her heart"; now in impatient resentment, meditating with what bitter terms she should rebuke his filial disobedience upon his return, and now studying the most tender language to attach him to the cottage, which, when her boy was present, she would not, in the rapture of her affection, have exchanged for the apartments of Taymouth Castle.

Two days passed, during which, neglecting even the slender means of supporting nature which her situation afforded, nothing but the strength of a frame accustomed to hardships and privations of every kind could have kept her in existence, notwithstanding the anguish of her mind prevented her being sensible of her personal weakness. Her dwelling, at this period, was the same cottage near which I had found her, but then more habitable by the exertions of Hamish, by whom it had been in a great measure built and repaired.

It was on the third day after her son had disappeared, as she sat at the door rocking herself, after the fashion of her countrywomen when in distress or in pain, that the then unwonted circumstance occurred of a passenger being seen on the high-road above the cottage. She cast but one

glance at him — he was on horseback, so that it could not be Hamish, and Elspat cared not enough for any other being on earth, to make her turn her eyes towards him a second time. The stranger, however, paused opposite to her cottage, and, dismounting from his pony, led it down the steep and broken path which conducted to her door.

"God bless you, Elspat MacTavish!" — She looked at the man as he addressed her in her native language, with the displeased air of one whose reverie is interrupted; but the traveller went on to say, "I bring you tidings of your son Hamish." At once, from being the most uninteresting object, in respect to Elspat, that could exist, the form of the stranger became awful in her eyes, as that of a messenger descended from Heaven, expressly to pronounce upon her death or life. She started from her seat, and with hands convulsively clasped together, and held up to heaven, eyes fixed on the stranger's countenance, and person stooping forward to him, she looked those inquiries which her faltering tongue could not articulate. "Your son sends you his dutiful remembrance, and this," said the messenger, putting into Elspat's hand a small purse containing four or five dollars.

"He is gone, he is gone!" exclaimed Elspat. "He has sold himself to be the servant of the Saxons, and I shall never more behold him! Tell me, Miles MacPhadraick, for now I know you, is it the price of the son's blood that you have put into the mother's hand?"

"Now, God forbid!" answered MacPhadraick, who was a tacksman, and had possession of a considerable tract of ground under his chief, a pro-

prietor who lived about twenty miles off — "God forbid I should do wrong, or say wrong, to you, or to the son of MacTavish Mhor! I swear to you by the hand of my chief that your son is well, and will soon see you; and the rest he will tell you himself." So saying, MacPhadraick hastened back up the pathway, gained the road, mounted his pony, and rode upon his way.

CHAPTER III.

Elspat MacTavish remained gazing on the money, as if the impress of the coin could have conveyed information how it was procured.

"I love not this MacPhadraick," she said to herself; "it was his race of whom the Bard hath spoken, saying, Fear them not when their words are loud as the winter's wind, but fear them when they fall on you like the sound of the thrush's song. And yet this riddle can be read but one way: My son hath taken the sword, to win that with strength like a man which churls would keep him from with the words that frighten children." This idea, when once it occurred to her, seemed the more reasonable, that MacPhadraick, as she well knew, himself a cautious man, had so far encouraged her husband's practices as occasionally to buy cattle of MacTavish, although he must have well known how they were come by, taking care, however, that the transaction was so made as to be accompanied with great profit and absolute safety. Who so likely as MacPhadraick to indicate to a young cateran the glen in which he could commence his perilous trade with most prospect of success, who so likely to convert his booty into money? The feelings which another might have experienced on believing that an only son had rushed forward on the same path in which his father had perished were scarce known to the

Highland mothers of that day. She thought of the death of MacTavish Mhor as that of a hero who had fallen in his proper trade of war, and who had not fallen unavenged. She feared less for her son's life than for his dishonour. She dreaded on his account the subjection to strangers, and the death-sleep of the soul which is brought on by what she regarded as slavery.

The moral principle which so naturally and so justly occurs to the mind of those who have been educated under a settled government of laws, that protect the property of the weak against the incursions of the strong, was to poor Elspat a book sealed and a fountain closed. She had been taught to consider those whom they called Saxons as a race with whom the Gael were constantly at war, and she regarded every settlement of theirs within the reach of Highland incursion as affording a legitimate object of attack and plunder. Her feelings on this point had been strengthened and confirmed, not only by the desire of revenge for the death of her husband, but by the sense of general indignation entertained, not unjustly, through the Highlands of Scotland, on account of the barbarous and violent conduct of the victors after the battle of Culloden. Other Highland clans, too, she regarded as the fair objects of plunder when that was possible, upon the score of ancient enmities and deadly feuds.

The prudence that might have weighed the slender means which the times afforded for resisting the efforts of a combined government, which had, in its less compact and established authority, been unable to put down the ravages of such lawless caterans as MacTavish Mhor, was unknown to a

solitary woman, whose ideas still dwelt upon her own early times. She imagined that her son had only to proclaim himself his father's successor in adventure and enterprise, and that a force of men as gallant as those who had followed his father's banner would crowd around to support it when again displayed. To her, Hamish was the eagle who had only to soar aloft and resume his native place in the skies, without her being able to comprehend how many additional eyes would have watched his flight, how many additional bullets would have been directed at his bosom. To be brief, Elspat was one who viewed the present state of society with the same feelings with which she regarded the times that had passed away. She had been indigent, neglected, oppressed, since the days that her husband had no longer been feared and powerful, and she thought that the term of her ascendence would return when her son had determined to play the part of his father. If she permitted her eye to glance farther into futurity, it was but to anticipate that she must be for many a day cold in the grave, with the coronach of her tribe cried duly over her, before her fair-haired Hamish could, according to her calculation, die with his hand on the basket-hilt of the red claymore. His father's hair was grey, ere, after a hundred dangers, he had fallen with his arms in his hands — That she should have seen and survived the sight was a natural consequence of the manners of that age. And better it was — such was her proud thought — that she had seen him so die, than to have witnessed his departure from life in a smoky hovel — on a bed of rotten straw, like an over-worn hound or a bullock which died of disease. But the hour

of her young, her brave Hamish was yet far distant. He must succeed — he must conquer, like his father. And when he fell at length — for she anticipated for him no bloodless death — Elspat would ere then have lain long in the grave, and could neither see his death-struggle nor mourn over his grave-sod.

With such wild notions working in her brain, the spirit of Elspat rose to its usual pitch, or rather to one which seemed higher. In the emphatic language of Scripture, which in that idiom does not greatly differ from her own, she arose, she washed and changed her apparel, and ate bread, and was refreshed.

She longed eagerly for the return of her son, but she now longed not with the bitter anxiety of doubt and apprehension. She said to herself, that much must be done ere he could in these times arise to be an eminent and dreaded leader. Yet when she saw him again, she almost expected him at the head of a daring band, with pipes playing and banners flying, the noble tartans fluttering free in the wind, in despite of the laws which had suppressed, under severe penalties, the use of the national garb, and all the appurtenances of Highland chivalry. For all this, her eager imagination was content only to allow the interval of some days.

From the moment this opinion had taken deep and serious possession of her mind, her thoughts were bent upon receiving her son at the head of his adherents in the manner in which she used to adorn her hut for the return of his father.

The substantial means of subsistence she had not the power of providing, nor did she consider that

of importance. The successful caterans would bring with them herds and flocks. But the interior of her hut was arranged for their reception — the usquebaugh was brewed or distilled in a larger quantity than it could have been supposed one lone woman could have made ready. Her hut was put into such order as might, in some degree, give it the appearance of a day of rejoicing. It was swept and decorated with boughs of various kinds, like the house of a Jewess upon what is termed the Feast of the Tabernacles. The produce of the milk of her little flock was prepared in as great variety of forms as her skill admitted, to entertain her son and his associates whom she expected to receive along with him.

But the principal decoration, which she sought with the greatest toil, was the cloud-berry, a scarlet fruit, which is only found on very high hills, and there only in small quantities. Her husband, or perhaps one of his forefathers, had chosen this as the emblem of his family, because it seemed at once to imply by its scarcity the smallness of their clan, and by the places in which it was found the ambitious height of their pretensions.

For the time that these simple preparations of welcome endured, Elspat was in a state of troubled happiness. In fact, her only anxiety was that she might be able to complete all that she could do to welcome Hamish and the friends who she supposed must have attached themselves to his band before they should arrive, and find her unprovided for their reception.

But when such efforts as she could make had been accomplished, she once more had nothing left to engage her save the trifling care of her goats:

and when these had been attended to, she had only to review her little preparations, renew such as were of a transitory nature, replace decayed branches and fading boughs, and then to sit down at her cottage door and watch the road, as it ascended on the one side from the banks of the Awe, and on the other wound round the heights of the mountain, with such a degree of accommodation to hill and level as the plan of the military engineer permitted. While so occupied, her imagination, anticipating the future from recollections of the past, formed out of the morning mist or the evening cloud the wild forms of an advancing band, which were then called "Sidier Dhu" — dark soldiers — dressed in their native tartan, and so named to distinguish them from the scarlet ranks of the British army. In this occupation she spent many hours of each morning and evening.

CHAPTER IV.

It was in vain that Elspat's eyes surveyed the distant path, by the earliest light of the dawn and the latest glimmer of the twilight. No rising dust awakened the expectation of nodding plumes or flashing arms — the solitary traveller trudged listlessly along in his brown Lowland greatcoat, his tartans dyed black or purple, to comply with or evade the law which prohibited their being worn in their variegated hues. The spirit of the Gael, sunk and broken by the severe though perhaps necessary laws that proscribed the dress and arms which he considered as his birthright, was intimated by his drooping head and dejected appearance. Not in such depressed wanderers did Elspat recognise the light and free step of her son, now, as she concluded, regenerated from every sign of Saxon thraldom. Night by night, as darkness came, she removed from her unclosed door to throw herself on her restless pallet, not to sleep, but to watch. The brave and the terrible, she said, walk by night — their steps are heard in darkness, when all is silent save the whirlwind and the cataract — the timid deer comes only forth when the sun is upon the mountain's peak; but the bold wolf walks in the red light of the harvest-moon. She reasoned in vain — her son's expected summons did not call her from the lowly couch, where she lay dreaming of his approach. Hamish came not.

"Hope deferred," saith the royal sage, "maketh the heart sick;" and, strong as was Elspat's constitution, she began to experience that it was unequal to the toils to which her anxious and immoderate affection subjected her, when early one morning the appearance of a traveller on the lonely mountain-road revived hopes which had begun to sink into listless despair. There was no sign of Saxon subjugation about the stranger. At a distance she could see the flutter of the belted plaid, that drooped in graceful folds behind him, and the plume that, placed in the bonnet, showed rank and gentle birth. He carried a gun over his shoulder, the claymore was swinging by his side, with its usual appendages, the dirk, the pistol, and the *sporran mollach.*[1] Ere yet her eye had scanned all these particulars, the light step of the traveller was hastened, his arm was waved in token of recognition — a moment more, and Elspat held in her arms her darling son, dressed in the garb of his ancestors, and looking, in her maternal eyes, the fairest among ten thousand.

The first outpouring of affection it would be impossible to describe. Blessings mingled with the most endearing epithets which her energetic language affords, in striving to express the wild rapture of Elspat's joy. Her board was heaped hastily with all she had to offer; and the mother watched the young soldier, as he partook of the refreshment, with feelings how similar to, yet how different from, those with which she had seen him draw his first sustenance from her bosom!

When the tumult of joy was appeased, Elspat

[1] The goat-skin pouch worn by the Highlanders round their waist.

became anxious to know her son's adventures since they parted, and could not help greatly censuring his rashness for traversing the hills in the Highland dress in the broad sunshine, when the penalty was so heavy, and so many red soldiers were abroad in the country.

"Fear not for me, mother," said Hamish, in a tone designed to relieve her anxiety, and yet somewhat embarrassed; "I may wear the *breacan*[1] at the gate of Fort Augustus, if I like it."

"Oh, be not too daring, my beloved Hamish, though it be the fault which best becomes thy father's son — yet be not too daring! Alas, they fight not now as in former days, with fair weapons and on equal terms, but take odds of numbers and of arms, so that the feeble and the strong are alike levelled by the shot of a boy. And do not think me unworthy to be called your father's widow, and your mother, because I speak thus; for God knoweth that, man to man, I would peril thee against the best in Breadalbane, and broad Lorn besides."

"I assure you, my dearest mother," replied Hamish, "that I am in no danger. But have you seen MacPhadraick, mother, and what has he said to you on my account?"

"Silver he left me in plenty, Hamish; but the best of his comfort was, that you were well, and would see me soon. But beware of MacPhadraick, my son; for when he called himself the friend of your father, he better loved the most worthless stirk in his herd than he did the life-blood of MacTavish Mhor. Use his services, therefore,

[1] That which is variegated, *i. e* the tartan.

and pay him for them — for it is thus we should deal with the unworthy; but take my counsel, and trust him not."

Hamish could not suppress a sigh, which seemed to Elspat to intimate that the caution came too late. "What have you done with him?" she continued, eager and alarmed. "I had money of him, and he gives not that without value — he is none of those who exchange barley for chaff. Oh, if you repent you of your bargain, and if it be one which you may break off without disgrace to your truth or your manhood, take back his silver, and trust not to his fair words."

"It may not be, mother," said Hamish; "I do not repent my engagement, unless that it must make me leave you soon."

"Leave me! how leave me? Silly boy, think you I know not what duty belongs to the wife or mother of a daring man? Thou art but a boy yet; and when thy father had been the dread of the country for twenty years, he did not despise my company and assistance, but often said my help was worth that of two strong gillies."

"It is not on that score, mother; but since I must leave the country" ——

"Leave the country!" replied his mother, interrupting him. "And think you that I am like a bush, that is rooted to the soil where it grows, and must die if carried elsewhere? I have breathed other winds than these of Ben Cruachan — I have followed your father to the wilds of Ross, and the impenetrable deserts of Y Mac Y Mhor — Tush, man, my limbs, old as they are, will bear me as far as your young feet can trace the way."

"Alas, mother," said the young man, with a faltering accent, "but to cross the sea"——

"The sea! who am I that I should fear the sea? Have I never been in a birling in my life — never known the Sound of Mull, the Isles of Treshornish, and the rough rocks of Harris?"

"Alas, mother, I go far, far from all of these — I am enlisted in one of the new regiments, and we go against the French in America."

"Enlisted!" uttered the astonished mother — "against *my* will — without *my* consent — You could not — you would not" — then rising up and assuming a posture of almost imperial command, "Hamish, you DARED not!"

"Despair, mother, dares everything," answered Hamish, in a tone of melancholy resolution. "What should I do here, where I can scarce get bread for myself and you, and when the times are growing daily worse? Would you but sit down and listen, I would convince you I have acted for the best."

With a bitter smile Elspat sat down, and the same severe ironical expression was on her features as, with her lips firmly closed, she listened to his vindication.

Hamish went on, without being disconcerted by her expected displeasure. "When I left you, dearest mother, it was to go to MacPhadraick's house, for although I knew he is crafty and worldly, after the fashion of the Sassenach, yet he is wise, and I thought how he would teach me, as it would cost him nothing, in which way I could mend our estate in the world."

"Our estate in the world!" said Elspat, losing patience at the word. "And went you to a base

fellow, with a soul no better than that of a cow-herd, to ask counsel about your conduct? Your father asked none, save of his courage and his sword."

"Dearest mother," answered Hamish, "how shall I convince you that you live in this land of our fathers as if our fathers were yet living? You walk as it were in a dream, surrounded by the phantoms of those who have been long with the dead. When my father lived and fought, the great respected the man of the strong right hand, and the rich feared him. He had protection from Mac-Callum More, and from Caberfae,[1] and tribute from meaner men. That is ended, and his son would only earn a disgraceful and unpitied death, by the practices which gave his father credit and power among those who wear the breacan. The land is conquered — its lights are quenched — Glengarry, Lochiel, Perth, Lord Lewis, all the high chiefs are dead or in exile — We may mourn for it, but we cannot help it. Bonnet, broadsword, and sporran — power, strength, and wealth, were all lost on Drummossie Muir."

"It is false!" said Elspat, fiercely. "You, and such like dastardly spirits, are quelled by your own faint hearts, not by the strength of the enemy; you are like the fearful waterfowl, to whom the least cloud in the sky seems the shadow of the eagle."

"Mother," said Hamish, proudly, "lay not faint heart to my charge. I go where men are wanted who have strong arms and bold hearts too. I leave a desert for a land where I may gather fame."

[1] Caberfae — *Anglicé*, the stag's head, the Celtic designation for the arms of the family of the high Chief of Seaforth.

"And you leave your mother to perish in want, age, and solitude," said Elspat, essaying successively every means of moving a resolution which she began to see was more deeply rooted than she had at first thought.

"Not so, neither," he answered; "I leave you to comfort and certainty, which you have yet never known. Barcaldine's son is made a leader, and with him I have enrolled myself; MacPhadraick acts for him, and raises men, and finds his own in it."

"That is the truest word of the tale, were all the rest as false as hell," said the old woman, bitterly.

"But we are to find our good in it also," continued Hamish; "for Barcaldine is to give you a shieling in his wood of Letterfindreight, with grass for your goats, and a cow, when you please to have one, on the common; and my own pay, dearest mother, though I am far away, will do more than provide you with meal, and with all else you can want. Do not fear for me. I enter a private gentleman; but I will return, if hard fighting and regular duty can deserve it, an officer, and with half a dollar a day."

"Poor child!" replied Elspat, in a tone of pity mingled with contempt. "And you trust MacPhadraick?"

"I might, mother," said Hamish, the dark red colour of his race crossing his forehead and cheeks, "for MacPhadraick knows the blood which flows in my veins, and is aware that, should he break trust with you, he might count the days which could bring Hamish back to Breadalbane, and number those of his life within three suns more. I would kill him at his own hearth, did he break

his word with me — I would, by the great Being who made us both!"

The look and attitude of the young soldier for a moment overawed Elspat; she was unused to see him express a deep and bitter mood, which reminded her so strongly of his father, but she resumed her remonstrances in the same taunting manner in which she had commenced them.

"Poor boy!" she said. "And you think that at the distance of half the world your threats will be heard or thought of! But, go — go — place your neck under him of Hanover's yoke, against whom every true Gael fought to the death — Go, disown the royal Stuart, for whom your father, and his fathers, and your mother's fathers have crimsoned many a field with their blood. — Go, put your head under the belt of one of the race of Dermid, whose children murdered — Yes," she added, with a wild shriek, "murdered your mother's fathers in their peaceful dwellings in Glencoe! — Yes," she again exclaimed, with a wilder and shriller scream, "I was then unborn, but my mother has told me — and I attended to the voice of *my* mother — well I remember her words! — They came in peace, and were received in friendship, and blood and fire arose, and screams and murder!" [1]

"Mother," answered Hamish, mournfully, but with a decided tone, "all that I have thought over — there is not a drop of the blood of Glencoe on the noble hand of Barcaldine — with the unhappy house of Glenlyon the curse remains, and on them God hath avenged it."

"You speak like the Saxon priest already,"

[1] Note IX. — Massacre of Glencoe.

replied his mother. "Will you not better stay, and ask a kirk from MacCallum More, that you may preach forgiveness to the race of Dermid?"

"Yesterday was yesterday," answered Hamish, "and to-day is to-day. When the clans are crushed and confounded together, it is well and wise that their hatreds and their feuds should not survive their independence and their power. He that cannot execute vengeance like a man should not harbour useless enmity like a craven. Mother, young Barcaldine is true and brave; I know that MacPhadraick counselled him that he should not let me take leave of you, lest you dissuaded me from my purpose; but he said, 'Hamish MacTavish is the son of a brave man, and he will not break his word.' Mother, Barcaldine leads a hundred of the bravest of the sons of the Gael in their native dress, and with their fathers' arms — heart to heart — shoulder to shoulder. I have sworn to go with him — He has trusted me, and I will trust him."

At this reply, so firmly and resolvedly pronounced, Elspat remained like one thunderstruck, and sunk in despair. The arguments which she had considered so irresistibly conclusive had recoiled like a wave from a rock. After a long pause, she filled her son's quaigh, and presented it to him with an air of dejected deference and submission.

"Drink," she said, "to thy father's roof-tree, ere you leave it for ever; and tell me — since the chains of a new king and of a new chief, whom your fathers knew not save as mortal enemies, are fastened upon the limbs of your father's son — tell me how many links you count upon them?"

Hamish took the cup, but looked at her as if uncertain of her meaning. She proceeded in a raised voice. "Tell me," she said, "for I have a right to know, for how many days the will of those you have made your masters permits me to look upon you? — In other words, how many are the days of my life — for when you leave me the earth has naught besides worth living for!"

"Mother," replied Hamish MacTavish, "for six days I may remain with you, and, if you will set out with me on the fifth, I will conduct you in safety to your new dwelling. But if you remain here, then I will depart on the seventh by day-break — then, as at the last moment, I MUST set out for Dumbarton, for if I appear not on the eighth day I am subject to punishment as a deserter, and am dishonoured as a soldier and a gentleman."

"Your father's foot," she answered, "was free as the wind on the heath — it were as vain to say to him where goest thou, as to ask that viewless driver of the clouds, Wherefore blowest thou? Tell me under what penalty thou must — since go thou must, and go thou wilt — return to thy thraldom?"

"Call it not thraldom, mother, it is the service of an honourable soldier — the only service which is now open to the son of MacTavish Mhor."

"Yet say what is the penalty if thou shouldst not return?" replied Elspat.

"Military punishment as a deserter," answered Hamish; writhing, however, as his mother failed not to observe, under some internal feelings, which she resolved to probe to the uttermost.

"And that," she said, with assumed calmness,

which her glancing eye disowned, "is the punishment of a disobedient hound, is it not?"

"Ask me no more, mother," said Hamish; "the punishment is nothing to one who will never deserve it."

"To me it is something," replied Elspat, "since I know better than thou that where there is power to inflict there is often the will to do so without cause. I would pray for thee, Hamish, and I must know against what evils I should beseech Him who leaves none unguarded to protect thy youth and simplicity."

"Mother," said Hamish, "it signifies little to what a criminal may be exposed, if a man is determined not to be such. Our Highland chiefs used also to punish their vassals, and, as I have heard, severely. Was it not Lachlan MacIan, whom we remember of old, whose head was struck off by order of his chieftain for shooting at the stag before him?"

"Ay," said Elspat, "and right he had to lose it, since he dishonoured the father of the people even in the face of the assembled clan. But the chiefs were noble in their ire — they punished with the sharp blade, and not with the baton. Their punishments drew blood, but they did not infer dishonour. Canst thou say the same for the laws under whose yoke thou hast placed thy freeborn neck?"

"I cannot — mother — I cannot," said Hamish, mournfully. "I saw them punish a Sassenach for deserting, as they called it, his banner. He was scourged — I own it — scourged like a hound who has offended an imperious master. I was sick at the sight — I confess it. But the punishment of

dogs is only for those worse than dogs, who know not how to keep their faith."

"To this infamy, however, thou hast subjected thyself, Hamish," replied Elspat, "if thou shouldst give, or thy officers take, measure of offence against thee. — I speak no more to thee on thy purpose. — Were the sixth day from this morning's sun my dying day, and thou wert to stay to close mine eyes, thou wouldst run the risk of being lashed like a dog at a post — yes! unless thou hadst the gallant heart to leave me to die alone, and upon my desolate hearth, the last spark of thy father's fire, and of thy forsaken mother's life, to be extinguished together!" — Hamish traversed the hut with an impatient and angry pace.

"Mother," he said at length, "concern not yourself about such things. I cannot be subjected to such infamy, for never will I deserve it; and were I threatened with it, I should know how to die before I was so far dishonoured."

"There spoke the son of the husband of my heart!" replied Elspat; and she changed the discourse, and seemed to listen in melancholy acquiescence, when her son reminded her how short the time was which they were permitted to pass in each other's society, and entreated that it might be spent without useless and unpleasant recollections respecting the circumstances under which they must soon be separated.

Elspat was now satisfied that her son, with some of his father's other properties, preserved the haughty masculine spirit which rendered it impossible to divert him from a resolution which he had deliberately adopted. She assumed, therefore, an exterior of apparent submission to their inevitable

separation; and if she now and then broke out into complaints and murmurs, it was either that she could not altogether suppress the natural impetuosity of her temper, or because she had the wit to consider that a total and unreserved acquiescence might have seemed to her son constrained and suspicious, and induced him to watch and defeat the means by which she still hoped to prevent his leaving her. Her ardent though selfish affection for her son, incapable of being qualified by a regard for the true interests of the unfortunate object of her attachment, resembled the instinctive fondness of the animal race for their offspring; and, diving little further into futurity than one of the inferior creatures, she only felt that to be separated from Hamish was to die.

In the brief interval permitted them, Elspat exhausted every art which affection could devise to render agreeable to him the space which they were apparently to spend with each other. Her memory carried her far back into former days, and her stores of legendary history, which furnish at all times a principal amusement of the Highlander in his moments of repose, were augmented by an unusual acquaintance with the songs of ancient bards, and traditions of the most approved seannachies and tellers of tales. Her officious attentions to her son's accommodation, indeed, were so unremitted as almost to give him pain; and he endeavoured quietly to prevent her from taking so much personal toil in selecting the blooming heath for his bed, or preparing the meal for his refreshment. "Let me alone, Hamish," she would reply on such occasions; "you follow your own will in departing from your mother, let your mother have

hers in doing what gives her pleasure while you remain."

So much she seemed to be reconciled to the arrangements which he had made in her behalf, that she could hear him speak to her of her removing to the lands of Green Colin, as the gentleman was called, on whose estate he had provided her an asylum. In truth, however, nothing could be further from her thoughts. From what he had said during their first violent dispute, Elspat had gathered that, if Hamish returned not by the appointed time permitted by his furlough, he would incur the hazard of corporal punishment. Were he placed within the risk of being thus dishonoured, she was well aware that he would never submit to the disgrace, by a return to the regiment where it might be inflicted. Whether she looked to any further probable consequences of her unhappy scheme cannot be known; but the partner of MacTavish Mhor in all his perils and wanderings was familiar with a hundred instances of resistance or escape, by which one brave man, amidst a land of rocks, lakes, and mountains, dangerous passes, and dark forests, might baffle the pursuit of hundreds. For the future, therefore, she feared nothing: her sole engrossing object was to prevent her son from keeping his word with his commanding officer.

With this secret purpose, she evaded the proposal which Hamish repeatedly made, that they should set out together to take possession of her new abode; and she resisted it upon grounds apparently so natural to her character, that her son was neither alarmed nor displeased. "Let me not," she said, "in the same short week, bid fare-

well to my only son, and to the glen in which I have so long dwelt. Let my eye, when dimmed with weeping for thee, still look around, for a while at least, upon Loch Awe and on Ben Cruachan."

Hamish yielded the more willingly to his mother's humour in this particular, that one or two persons who resided in a neighbouring glen, and had given their sons to Barcaldine's levy, were also to be provided for on the estate of the chieftain, and it was apparently settled that Elspat was to take her journey along with them when they should remove to their new residence. Thus, Hamish believed that he had at once indulged his mother's humour and insured her safety and accommodation. But she nourished in her mind very different thoughts and projects!

The period of Hamish's leave of absence was fast approaching, and more than once he proposed to depart, in such time as to insure his gaining easily and early Dumbarton, the town where were the headquarters of his regiment. But still his mother's entreaties, his own natural disposition to linger among scenes long dear to him, and, above all, his firm reliance in his speed and activity, induced him to protract his departure till the sixth day, being the very last which he could possibly afford to spend with his mother, if indeed he meant to comply with the conditions of his furlough.

CHAPTER V.

> But, for your son, — believe it, O, believe it —
> Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
> If not most mortal to him.
>
> *Coriolanus.*

On the evening which preceded his proposed departure Hamish walked down to the river with his fishing-rod, to practise in the Awe, for the last time, a sport in which he excelled, and to find, at the same time, the means for making one social meal with his mother on something better than their ordinary cheer. He was as successful as usual, and soon killed a fine salmon. On his return homeward an incident befell him which he afterwards related as ominous, though probably his heated imagination, joined to the universal turn of his countrymen for the marvellous, exaggerated into superstitious importance some very ordinary and accidental circumstance.

In the path which he pursued homeward he was surprised to observe a person who, like himself, was dressed and armed after the old Highland fashion. The first idea that struck him was that the passenger belonged to his own corps, who, levied by government, and bearing arms under royal authority, were not amenable for breach of the statutes against the use of the Highland garb or weapons. But he was struck on perceiving, as he mended his pace to make up to his supposed

comrade, meaning to request his company for the next day's journey, that the stranger wore a white cockade, the fatal badge which was proscribed in the Highlands. The stature of the man was tall, and there was something shadowy in the outline which added to his size; and his mode of motion, which rather resembled gliding than walking, impressed Hamish with superstitious fears concerning the character of the being which thus passed before him in the twilight. He no longer strove to make up to the stranger, but contented himself with keeping him in view, under the superstition common to the Highlanders, that you ought neither to intrude yourself on such supernatural apparitions as you may witness, nor avoid their presence, but leave it to themselves to withhold or extend their communication, as their power may permit, or the purpose of their commission require.

Upon an elevated knoll by the side of the road, just where the pathway turned down to Elspat's hut, the stranger made a pause, and seemed to await Hamish's coming up. Hamish, on his part, seeing it was necessary he should pass the object of his suspicion, mustered up his courage, and approached the spot where the stranger had placed himself; who first pointed to Elspat's hut, and made, with arm and head, a gesture prohibiting Hamish to approach it, then stretched his hand to the road which led to the southward, with a motion which seemed to enjoin his instant departure in that direction. In a moment afterwards the plaided form was gone — Hamish did not exactly say vanished, because there were rocks and stunted trees enough to have concealed him; but it

was his own opinion that he had seen the spirit of MacTavish Mhor, warning him to commence his instant journey to Dumbarton, without waiting till morning, or again visiting his mother's hut.

In fact, so many accidents might arise to delay his journey, especially where there were many ferries, that it became his settled purpose, though he could not depart without bidding his mother adieu, that he neither could nor would abide longer than for that object; and that the first glimpse of next day's sun should see him many miles advanced towards Dumbarton. He descended the path, therefore, and entering the cottage, he communicated, in a hasty and troubled voice, which indicated mental agitation, his determination to take his instant departure. Somewhat to his surprise, Elspat appeared not to combat his purpose, but she urged him to take some refreshment ere he left her for ever. He did so hastily, and in silence, thinking on the approaching separation, and scarce yet believing it would take place without a final struggle with his mother's fondness. To his surprise, she filled the quaigh with liquor for his parting cup.

"Go," she said, "my son, since such is thy settled purpose; but first stand once more on thy mother's hearth, the flame on which will be extinguished long ere thy foot shall again be placed there."

"To your health, mother!" said Hamish, "and may we meet again in happiness, in spite of your ominous words."

"It were better not to part," said his mother, watching him as he quaffed the liquor, of which he would have held it ominous to have left a drop

"And now," she said, muttering the words to herself, "go — if thou canst go."

"Mother," said Hamish, as he replaced on the table the empty quaigh, "thy drink is pleasant to the taste, but it takes away the strength which it ought to give."

"Such is its first effect, my son," replied Elspat; "but lie down upon that soft heather couch, shut your eyes but for a moment, and, in the sleep of an hour, you shall have more refreshment than in the ordinary repose of three whole nights, could they be blended into one."

"Mother," said Hamish, upon whose brain the potion was now taking rapid effect, "give me my bonnet — I must kiss you and begone — yet it seems as if my feet were nailed to the floor."

"Indeed," said his mother, "you will be instantly well, if you will sit down for half an hour — but half an hour; it is eight hours to dawn, and dawn were time enough for your father's son to begin such a journey."

"I must obey you, mother — I feel I must," said Hamish, inarticulately; "but call me when the moon rises."

He sat down on the bed — reclined back, and almost instantly was fast asleep. With the throbbing glee of one who has brought to an end a difficult and troublesome enterprise, Elspat proceeded tenderly to arrange the plaid of the unconscious slumberer, to whom her extravagant affection was doomed to be so fatal, expressing, while busied in her office, her delight, in tones of mingled tenderness and triumph. "Yes," she said, "calf of my heart, the moon shall arise and set to thee, and so shall the sun; but not to light thee from the land

of thy fathers, or tempt thee to serve the foreign prince or the feudal enemy! To no son of Dermid shall I be delivered, to be fed like a bondswoman; but he who is my pleasure and my pride shall be my guard and my protector. They say the Highlands are changed; but I see Ben Cruachan rear his crest as high as ever into the evening sky — no one hath yet herded his kine on the depth of Loch Awe — and yonder oak does not yet bend like a willow. The children of the mountains will be such as their fathers, until the mountains themselves shall be levelled with the strath. In these wild forests, which used to support thousands of the brave, there is still surely subsistence and refuge left for one aged woman and one gallant youth, of the ancient race and the ancient manners."

While the misjudging mother thus exulted in the success of her stratagem, we may mention to the reader that it was founded on the acquaintance with drugs and simples, which Elspat, accomplished in all things belonging to the wild life which she had led, possessed in an uncommon degree, and which she exercised for various purposes. With the herbs, which she knew how to select as well as how to distil, she could relieve more diseases than a regular medical person could easily believe. She applied some to dye the bright colours of the tartan — from others she compounded draughts of various powers, and unhappily possessed the secret of one which was strongly soporific. Upon the effects of this last concoction, as the reader doubtless has anticipated, she reckoned with security on delaying Hamish beyond the period for which his return was ap-

pointed; and she trusted to his horror for the apprehended punishment to which he was thus rendered liable, to prevent him from returning at all.

Sound and deep, beyond natural rest, was the sleep of Hamish MacTavish on that eventful evening, but not such the repose of his mother. Scarce did she close her eyes from time to time, but she awakened again with a start, in the terror that her son had arisen and departed; and it was only on approaching his couch, and hearing his deep-drawn and regular breathing, that she reassured herself of the security of the repose in which he was plunged.

Still, dawning, she feared, might awaken him, notwithstanding the unusual strength of the potion with which she had drugged his cup. If there remained a hope of mortal man accomplishing the journey, she was aware that Hamish would attempt it, though he were to die from fatigue upon the road. Animated by this new fear, she studied to exclude the light, by stopping all the crannies and crevices through which, rather than through any regular entrance, the morning beams might find access to her miserable dwelling; and this in order to detain amid its wants and wretchedness the being on whom, if the world itself had been at her disposal, she would have joyfully conferred it.

Her pains were bestowed unnecessarily. The sun rose high above the heavens, and not the fleetest stag in Breadalbane, were the hounds at his heels, could have sped, to save his life, so fast as would have been necessary to keep Hamish's appointment. Her purpose was fully attained — her

son's return within the period assigned was impossible. She deemed it equally impossible that he would ever dream of returning, standing, as he must now do, in the danger of an infamous punishment. By degrees, and at different times, she had gained from him a full acquaintance with the predicament in which he would be placed by failing to appear on the day appointed, and the very small hope he could entertain of being treated with lenity.

It is well known that the great and wise Earl of Chatham prided himself on the scheme by which he drew together for the defence of the colonies those hardy Highlanders who, until his time, had been the objects of doubt, fear, and suspicion, on the part of each successive administration. But some obstacles occurred, from the peculiar habits and temper of this people, to the execution of his patriotic project. By nature and habit, every Highlander was accustomed to the use of arms, but at the same time totally unaccustomed to, and impatient of, the restraints imposed by discipline upon regular troops. They were a species of militia, who had no conception of a camp as their only home. If a battle was lost, they dispersed to save themselves, and look out for the safety of their families; if won, they went back to their glens to hoard up their booty, and attend to their cattle and their farms. This privilege of going and coming at pleasure they would not be deprived of even by their chiefs, whose authority was in most other respects so despotic. It followed, as a matter of course, that the new-levied Highland recruits could scarce be made to comprehend the nature of a military

engagement, which compelled a man to serve in the army longer than he pleased; and perhaps, in many instances, sufficient care was not taken at enlisting to explain to them the permanency of the engagement which they came under, lest such a disclosure should induce them to change their mind. Desertions were therefore become numerous from the newly raised regiment, and the veteran general who commanded at Dumbarton saw no better way of checking them than by causing an unusually severe example to be made of a deserter from an English corps. The young Highland regiment was obliged to attend upon the punishment, which struck a people, peculiarly jealous of personal honour, with equal horror and disgust, and not unnaturally indisposed some of them to the service. The old general, however, who had been regularly bred in the German wars, stuck to his own opinion, and gave out in orders that the first Highlander who might either desert, or fail to appear at the expiry of his furlough, should be brought to the halberds, and punished like the culprit whom they had seen in that condition. No man doubted that General —— would keep his word rigorously whenever severity was required, and Elspat, therefore, knew that her son, when he perceived that due compliance with his orders was impossible, must at the same time consider the degrading punishment denounced against his defection as inevitable, should he place himself within the general's power.[1]

When noon was well passed, new apprehensions came on the mind of the lonely woman. Her son still slept under the influence of the draught; but

[1] Note X. — Fidelity of the Highlanders.

what if, being stronger than she had ever known it administered, his health or his reason should be affected by its potency? For the first time, likewise, notwithstanding her high ideas on the subject of parental authority, she began to dread the resentment of her son, whom her heart told her she had wronged. Of late, she had observed that his temper was less docile, and his determinations, especially upon this late occasion of his enlistment, independently formed, and then boldly carried through. She remembered the stern wilfulness of his father when he accounted himself ill-used, and began to dread that Hamish, upon finding the deceit she had put upon him, might resent it even to the extent of casting her off, and pursuing his own course through the world alone. Such were the alarming and yet the reasonable apprehensions which began to crowd upon the unfortunate woman, after the apparent success of her ill-advised stratagem.

It was near evening when Hamish first awoke, and then he was far from being in the full possession either of his mental or bodily powers. From his vague expressions and disordered pulse, Elspat at first experienced much apprehension; but she used such expedients as her medical knowledge suggested; and in the course of the night she had the satisfaction to see him sink once more into a deep sleep, which probably carried off the greater part of the effects of the drug, for about sun-rising she heard him arise and call to her for his bonnet. This she had purposely removed, from a fear that he might awaken and depart in the night-time, without her knowledge.

"My bonnet — my bonnet," cried Hamish, "it

is time to take farewell. Mother, your drink was too strong — the sun is up — but with the next morning I will still see the double summit of the ancient Dun. My bonnet — my bonnet! mother, I must be instant in my departure." These expressions made it plain that poor Hamish was unconscious that two nights and a day had passed since he had drained the fatal quaigh, and Elspat had now to venture on what she felt as the almost perilous as well as painful task of explaining her machinations.

"Forgive me, my son," she said, approaching Hamish, and taking him by the hand with an air of deferential awe, which perhaps she had not always used to his father, even when in his moody fits.

"Forgive you, mother — for what?" said Hamish, laughing; "for giving me a dram that was too strong, and which my head still feels this morning, or for hiding my bonnet to keep me an instant longer? Nay, do *you* forgive *me*. Give me the bonnet, and let that be done which now must be done. Give me my bonnet, or I go without it; surely I am not to be delayed by so trifling a want as that — I, who have gone for years with only a strap of deer's hide to tie back my hair Trifle not, but give it me, or I must go bareheaded, since to stay is impossible."

"My son," said Elspat, keeping fast hold of his hand, "what is done cannot be recalled; could you borrow the wings of yonder eagle, you would arrive at the Dun too late for what you purpose — too soon for what awaits you there. You believe you see the sun rising for the first time since you have seen him set, but yesterday beheld him

climb Ben Cruachan, though your eyes were closed to his light."

Hamish cast upon his mother a wild glance of extreme terror, then, instantly recovering himself, said — "I am no child to be cheated out of my purpose by such tricks as these — Farewell, mother, each moment is worth a lifetime."

"Stay," she said, "my dear — my deceived son! Rush not on infamy and ruin — Yonder I see the priest upon the high-road on his white horse — ask him the day of the month and week — let him decide between us."

With the speed of an eagle Hamish darted up the acclivity, and stood by the minister of Glenorchy, who was pacing out thus early to administer consolation to a distressed family near Bunawe.

The good man was somewhat startled to behold an armed Highlander, then so unusual a sight, and apparently much agitated, stop his horse by the bridle, and ask him with a faltering voice the day of the week and month. "Had you been where you should have been yesterday, young man," replied the clergyman, "you would have known that it was God's Sabbath; and that this is Monday, the second day of the week, and twenty-first of the month."

"And this is true?" said Hamish.

"As true," answered the surprised minister, "as that I yesterday preached the word of God to this parish. — What ails you, young man? Are you sick? Are you in your right mind?"

Hamish made no answer, only repeated to himself the first expression of the clergyman — "Had you been where you should have been yesterday;" and, so saying, he let go the bridle, turned from

the road, and descended the path towards the hut, with the look and pace of one who was going to execution. The minister looked after him with surprise; but although he knew the inhabitant of the hovel, the character of Elspat had not invited him to open any communication with her, because she was generally reputed a Papist, or rather one indifferent to all religion, except some superstitious observances which had been handed down from her parents. On Hamish the Reverend Mr. Tyrie had bestowed instructions when he was occasionally thrown in his way, and, if the seed fell among the brambles and thorns of a wild and uncultivated disposition, it had not yet been entirely checked or destroyed. There was something so ghastly in the present expression of the youth's features, that the good man was tempted to go down to the hovel and inquire whether any distress had befallen the inhabitants, in which his presence might be consoling and his ministry useful. Unhappily he did not persevere in this resolution, which might have saved a great misfortune, as he would have probably become a mediator for the unfortunate young man; but a recollection of the wild moods of such Highlanders as had been educated after the old fashion of the country prevented his interesting himself in the widow and son of the far-dreaded robber MacTavish Mhor; and he thus missed an opportunity, which he afterwards sorely repented, of doing much good.

When Hamish MacTavish entered his mother's hut, it was only to throw himself on the bed he had left, and, exclaiming, "Undone, undone!" to give vent, in cries of grief and anger, to his deep sense of the deceit which had been practised on

him, and of the cruel predicament to which he was reduced.

Elspat was prepared for the first explosion of her son's passion, and said to herself, "It is but the mountain torrent, swelled by the thunder shower. Let us sit and rest us by the bank; for all its present tumult, the time will soon come when we may pass it dryshod." She suffered his complaints and his reproaches, which were, even in the midst of his agony, respectful and affectionate, to die away without returning any answer; and when, at length, having exhausted all the exclamations of sorrow which his language, copious in expressing the feelings of the heart, affords to the sufferer, he sank into a gloomy silence, she suffered the interval to continue near an hour ere she approached her son's couch.

"And now," she said at length, with a voice in which the authority of the mother was qualified by her tenderness, "have you exhausted your idle sorrows, and are you able to place what you have gained against what you have lost? Is the false son of Dermid your brother, or the father of your tribe, that you weep because you cannot bind yourself to his belt, and become one of those who must do his bidding? Could you find in yonder distant country the lakes and the mountains that you leave behind you here? Can you hunt the deer of Breadalbane in the forests of America, or will the ocean afford you the silver-scaled salmon of the Awe? Consider, then, what is your loss, and, like a wise man, set it against what you have won."

"I have lost all, mother," replied Hamish, "since I have broken my word, and lost my

honour. I might tell my tale, but who — oh, who would believe me?" The unfortunate young man again clasped his hands together, and, pressing them to his forehead, hid his face upon the bed.

Elspat was now really alarmed, and perhaps wished the fatal deceit had been left unattempted. She had no hope or refuge saving in the eloquence of persuasion, of which she possessed no small share, though her total ignorance of the world as it actually existed rendered its energy unavailing. She urged her son, by every tender epithet which a parent could bestow, to take care for his own safety.

"Leave me," she said, "to baffle your pursuers. I will save your life — I will save your honour — I will tell them that my fair-haired Hamish fell from the Corrie dhu [black precipice] into the gulf, of which human eye never beheld the bottom. I will tell them this, and I will fling your plaid on the thorns which grow on the brink of the precipice, that they may believe my words. They will believe, and they will return to the Dun of the double-crest; for though the Saxon drum can call the living to die, it cannot recall the dead to their slavish standard. Then will we travel together far northward to the salt lakes of Kintail, and place glens and mountains betwixt us and the sons of Dermid. We will visit the shores of the dark lake, and my kinsmen — (for was not my mother of the children of Kenneth, and will they not remember us with the old love?) — my kinsmen will receive us with the affection of the olden time, which lives in those distant glens, where the Gael still dwell in their nobleness, unmingled

with the churl Saxons, or with the base brood that are their tools and their slaves "

The energy of the language, somewhat allied to hyperbole, even in its most ordinary expressions, now seemed almost too weak to afford Elspat the means of bringing out the splendid picture which she presented to her son of the land in which she proposed to him to take refuge. Yet the colours were few with which she could paint her Highland paradise. "The hills," she said, "were higher and more magnificent than those of Breadalbane — Ben Cruachan was but a dwarf to Skooroora. The lakes were broader and larger, and abounded not only with fish, but with the enchanted and amphibious animal which gives oil to the lamp.[1] The deer were larger and more numerous — the white-tusked boar, the chase of which the brave loved best, was yet to be roused in those western solitudes — the men were nobler, wiser, and stronger than the degenerate brood who lived under the Saxon banner. The daughters of the land were beautiful, with blue eyes and fair hair, and bosoms of snow, and out of these she would choose a wife for Hamish, of blameless descent, spotless fame, fixed and true affection, who should be in their summer bothy as a beam of the sun, and in their winter abode as the warmth of the needful fire."

Such were the topics with which Elspat strove to soothe the despair of her son, and to determine him, if possible, to leave the fatal spot, on which he seemed resolved to linger. The style of her rhetoric was poetical, but in other respects re-

[1] The seals are considered by the Highlanders as enchanted princes.

sembled that which, like other fond mothers, she had lavished on Hamish, while a child or a boy, in order to gain his consent to do something he had no mind to; and she spoke louder, quicker, and more earnestly, in proportion as she began to despair of her words carrying conviction.

On the mind of Hamish her eloquence made no impression. He knew far better than she did the actual situation of the country, and was sensible, that, though it might be possible to hide himself as a fugitive among more distant mountains, there was now no corner in the Highlands in which his father's profession could be practised, even if he had not adopted, from the improved ideas of the time when he lived, the opinion that the trade of the cateran was no longer the road to honour and distinction. Her words were therefore poured into regardless ears, and she exhausted herself in vain in the attempt to paint the regions of her mother's kinsmen in such terms as might tempt Hamish to accompany her thither. She spoke for hours, but she spoke in vain. She could extort no answer, save groans, and sighs, and ejaculations, expressing the extremity of despair.

At length, starting on her feet, and changing the monotonous tone in which she had chanted, as it were, the praises of the province of refuge, into the short, stern language of eager passion — "I am a fool," she said, "to spend my words upon an idle, poor-spirited, unintelligent boy, who crouches like a hound to the lash. Wait here, and receive your taskmasters, and abide your chastisement at their hands; but do not think your mother's eyes will behold it. I could not see it and live. My eyes have looked often upon death,

but never upon dishonour. Farewell, Hamish!—We never meet again."

She dashed from the hut like a lapwing, and perhaps for the moment actually entertained the purpose which she expressed, of parting with her son for ever. A fearful sight she would have been that evening to any who might have met her wandering through the wilderness like a restless spirit, and speaking to herself in language which will endure no translation. She rambled for hours, seeking rather than shunning the most dangerous paths. The precarious track through the morass, the dizzy path along the edge of the precipice, or by the banks of the gulfing river, were the roads which, far from avoiding, she sought with eagerness, and traversed with reckless haste. But the courage arising from despair was the means of saving the life which (though deliberate suicide was rarely practised in the Highlands) she was perhaps desirous of terminating. Her step on the verge of the precipice was firm as that of the wild goat. Her eye, in that state of excitation, was so keen as to discern, even amid darkness, the perils which noon would not have enabled a stranger to avoid.

Elspat's course was not directly forward, else she had soon been far from the bothy in which she had left her son. It was circuitous, for that hut was the centre to which her heartstrings were chained, and, though she wandered around it, she felt it impossible to leave the vicinity. With the first beams of morning she returned to the hut. A while she paused at the wattled door, as if ashamed that lingering fondness should have brought her back to the spot which she had left with the pur-

pose of never returning; but there was yet more of fear and anxiety in her hesitation — of anxiety lest her fair-haired son had suffered from the effects of her potion — of fear lest his enemies had come upon him in the night. She opened the door of the hut gently, and entered with noiseless step. Exhausted with his sorrow and anxiety, and not entirely relieved perhaps from the influence of the powerful opiate, Hamish Bean again slept the stern sound sleep by which the Indians are said to be overcome during the interval of their torments. His mother was scarcely sure that she actually discerned his form on the bed, scarce certain that her ear caught the sound of his breathing. With a throbbing heart Elspat went to the fireplace in the centre of the hut, where slumbered, covered with a piece of turf, the glimmering embers of the fire, never extinguished on a Scottish hearth until the indwellers leave the mansion for ever.

"Feeble greishogh,"[1] she said, as she lighted, by the help of a match, a splinter of bog pine which was to serve the place of a candle; "weak greishogh, soon shalt thou be put out for ever, and may Heaven grant that the life of Elspat MacTavish have no longer duration than thine!"

While she spoke she raised the blazing light towards the bed, on which still lay the prostrate limbs of her son, in a posture that left it doubtful whether he slept or swooned. As she advanced towards him the light flashed upon his eyes — he started up in an instant, made a stride forward with his naked dirk in his hand, like a man armed to meet a mortal enemy, and exclaimed, "Stand off! — on thy life, stand off!"

[1] *Greishogh*, a glowing ember.

"It is the word and the action of my husband," answered Elspat; "and I know by his speech and his step the son of MacTavish Mhor."

"Mother," said Hamish, relapsing from his tone of desperate firmness into one of melancholy expostulation — "oh, dearest mother, wherefore have you returned hither?"

"Ask why the hind comes back to the fawn," said Elspat; "why the cat of the mountain returns to her lodge and her young. Know you, Hamish, that the heart of the mother only lives in the bosom of the child."

"Then will it soon cease to throb," said Hamish, "unless it can beat within a bosom that lies beneath the turf. — Mother, do not blame me; if I weep, it is not for myself but for you, for my sufferings will soon be over; but yours —— Oh, who but Heaven shall set a boundary to them!"

Elspat shuddered and stepped backward, but almost instantly resumed her firm and upright position and her dauntless bearing.

"I thought thou wert a man but even now," she said, "and thou art again a child. Hearken to me yet, and let us leave this place together. Have I done thee wrong or injury? If so, yet do not avenge it so cruelly — See, Elspat MacTavish, who never kneeled before even to a priest, falls prostrate before her own son, and craves his forgiveness." And at once she threw herself on her knees before the young man, seized on his hand, and, kissing it a hundred times, repeated as often, in heart-breaking accents, the most earnest entreaties for forgiveness. "Pardon," she exclaimed, "pardon, for the sake of your father's ashes — pardon, for the sake of the pain with which I bore thee, the

care with which I nurtured thee! — Hear it, Heaven, and behold it, Earth — the mother asks pardon of her child, and she is refused!"

It was in vain that Hamish endeavoured to stem this tide of passion, by assuring his mother, with the most solemn asseverations, that he forgave entirely the fatal deceit which she had practised upon him.

"Empty words," she said; "idle protestations, which are but used to hide the obduracy of your resentment. Would you have me believe you, then leave the hut this instant, and retire from a country which every hour renders more dangerous. — Do this, and I may think you have forgiven me — refuse it, and again I call on moon and stars, heaven and earth, to witness the unrelenting resentment with which you prosecute your mother for a fault which, if it be one, arose out of love to you."

"Mother," said Hamish, "on this subject you move me not. I will fly before no man. If Barcaldine should send every Gael that is under his banner, here, and in this place, will I abide them; and when you bid me fly, you may as well command yonder mountain to be loosened from its foundations. Had I been sure of the road by which they are coming hither, I had spared them the pains of seeking me; but I might go by the mountain, while they perchance came by the lake. Here I will abide my fate; nor is there in Scotland a voice of power enough to bid me stir from hence, and be obeyed."

"Here, then, I also stay," said Elspat, rising up and speaking with assumed composure. "I have seen my husband's death — my eyelids shall

not grieve to look on the fall of my son. But MacTavish Mhor died as became the brave, with his good sword in his right hand; my son will perish like the bullock that is driven to the shambles by the Saxon owner who has bought him for a price."

"Mother," said the unhappy young man, "you have taken my life; to that you have a right, for you gave it; but touch not my honour! It came to me from a brave train of ancestors, and should be sullied neither by man's deed nor woman's speech. What I shall do, perhaps I myself yet know not; but tempt me no further by reproachful words; you have already made wounds more than you can ever heal."

"It is well, my son," said Elspat, in reply. "Expect neither further complaint nor remonstrance from me; but let us be silent, and wait the chance which Heaven shall send us."

The sun arose on the next morning, and found the bothy silent as the grave. The mother and son had arisen, and were engaged each in their separate task — Hamish in preparing and cleaning his arms with the greatest accuracy, but with an air of deep dejection. Elspat, more restless in her agony of spirit, employed herself in making ready the food which the distress of yesterday had induced them both to dispense with for an unusual number of hours. She placed it on the board before her son so soon as it was prepared, with the words of a Gaelic poet, "Without daily food, the husbandman's ploughshare stands still in the furrow; without daily food, the sword of the warrior is too heavy for his hand. Our bodies are our slaves, yet they must be fed if we would have their

service. So spake in ancient days the Blind Bard to the warriors of Fion."

The young man made no reply, but he fed on what was placed before him, as if to gather strength for the scene which he was to undergo. When his mother saw that he had eaten what sufficed him, she again filled the fatal quaigh, and proffered it as the conclusion of the repast. But he started aside with a convulsive gesture, expressive at once of fear and abhorrence.

"Nay, my son," she said, "this time, surely, thou hast no cause of fear."

"Urge me not, mother," answered Hamish; "or put the leprous toad into a flagon, and I will drink; but from that accursed cup, and of that mind-destroying potion, never will I taste more!"

"At your pleasure, my son," said Elspat, haughtily, and began, with much apparent assiduity, the various domestic tasks which had been interrupted during the preceding day. Whatever was at her heart, all anxiety seemed banished from her looks and demeanour. It was but from an over-activity of bustling exertion that it might have been perceived, by a close observer, that her actions were spurred by some internal cause of painful excitement; and such a spectator, too, might also have observed how often she broke off the snatches of songs or tunes which she hummed, apparently without knowing what she was doing, in order to cast a hasty glance from the door of the hut. Whatever might be in the mind of Hamish, his demeanour was directly the reverse of that adopted by his mother. Having finished the task of cleaning and preparing his arms, which he arranged within the hut, he sat himself down

before the door of the bothy, and watched the opposite hill, like the fixed sentinel who expects the approach of an enemy. Noon found him in the same unchanged posture, and it was an hour after that period, when his mother, standing beside him, laid her hand on his shoulder, and said, in a tone indifferent, as if she had been talking of some friendly visit, "When dost thou expect them?"

"They cannot be here till the shadows fall long to the eastward," replied Hamish; "that is, even supposing the nearest party, commanded by Sergeant Allan Breack Cameron, has been commanded hither by express from Dumbarton, as it is most likely they will."

"Then enter beneath your mother's roof once more; partake the last time of the food which she has prepared; after this, let them come, and thou shalt see if thy mother is a useless incumbrance in the day of strife. Thy hand, practised as it is, cannot fire these arms so fast as I can load them; nay, if it is necessary, I do not myself fear the flash or the report, and my aim has been held fatal."

"In the name of Heaven, mother, meddle not with this matter!" said Hamish. "Allan Breack is a wise man and a kind one, and comes of a good stem. It may be, he can promise for our officers, that they will touch me with no infamous punishment; and if they offer me confinement in the dungeon, or death by the musket, to that I may not object."

"Alas, and wilt thou trust to their word, my foolish child? Remember the race of Dermid were ever fair and false, and no sooner shall they

have gyves on thy hands than they will strip thy shoulders for the scourge."

"Save your advice, mother," said Hamish, sternly; "for me, my mind is made up."

But though he spoke thus, to escape the almost persecuting urgency of his mother, Hamish would have found it, at that moment, impossible to say upon what course of conduct he had thus fixed. On one point alone he was determined — namely, to abide his destiny, be what it might, and not to add to the breach of his word, of which he had been involuntarily rendered guilty, by attempting to escape from punishment. This act of self-devotion he conceived to be due to his own honour, and that of his countrymen. Which of his comrades would in future be trusted, if he should be considered as having broken his word, and betrayed the confidence of his officers? and whom but Hamish Bean MacTavish would the Gael accuse, for having verified and confirmed the suspicions which the Saxon general was well known to entertain against the good faith of the Highlanders? He was, therefore, bent firmly to abide his fate. But whether his intention was to yield himself peaceably into the hands of the party who should come to apprehend him, or whether he purposed, by a show of resistance, to provoke them to kill him on the spot, was a question which he could not himself have answered. His desire to see Barcaldine, and explain the cause of his absence at the appointed time, urged him to the one course; his fear of the degrading punishment, and of his mother's bitter upbraidings, strongly instigated the latter and the more dangerous purpose. He left it to chance to decide when the crisis should

arrive; nor did he tarry long in expectation of the catastrophe.

Evening approached, the gigantic shadows of the mountains streamed in darkness towards the east, while their western peaks were still glowing with crimson and gold. The road which winds round Ben Cruachan was fully visible from the door of the bothy, when a party of five Highland soldiers, whose arms glanced in the sun, wheeled suddenly into sight from the most distant extremity, where the highway is hidden behind the mountain. One of the party walked a little before the other four, who marched regularly and in files, according to the rules of military discipline. There was no dispute, from the firelocks which they carried, and the plaids and bonnets which they wore, that they were a party of Hamish's regiment, under a non-commissioned officer; and there could be as little doubt of the purpose of their appearance on the banks of Loch Awe.

"They come briskly forward," said the widow of MacTavish Mhor. "I wonder how fast or how slow some of them will return again! But they are five, and it is too much odds for a fair field. Step back within the hut, my son, and shoot from the loophole beside the door. Two you may bring down ere they quit the high-road for the foot-path — there will remain but three; and your father, with my aid, has often stood against that number."

Hamish Bean took the gun which his mother offered, but did not stir from the door of the hut. He was soon visible to the party on the high-road, as was evident from their increasing their pace to a run; the files, however, still keeping together

like coupled greyhounds, and advancing with great rapidity. In far less time than would have been accomplished by men less accustomed to the mountains, they had left the high-road, traversed the narrow path, and approached within pistol-shot of the bothy, at the door of which stood Hamish, fixed like a statue of stone, with his firelock in his hand, while his mother, placed behind him, and almost driven to frenzy by the violence of her passions, reproached him, in the strongest terms which despair could invent, for his want of resolution and faintness of heart. Her words increased the bitter gall which was arising in the young man's own spirit, as he observed the unfriendly speed with which his late comrades were eagerly making towards him, like hounds towards the stag when he is at bay. The untamed and angry passions which he inherited from father and mother were awakened by the supposed hostility of those who pursued him; and the restraint under which these passions had been hitherto held by his sober judgment began gradually to give way. The sergeant now called to him, "Hamish Bean MacTavish, lay down your arms and surrender."

"Do *you* stand, Allan Breack Cameron, and command your men to stand, or it will be the worse for us all."

"Halt, men!" said the sergeant, but continuing himself to advance. "Hamish, think what you do, and give up your gun; you may spill blood, but you cannot escape punishment."

"The scourge — the scourge — my son, beware the scourge!" whispered his mother.

"Take heed, Allan Breack," said Hamish. "I would not hurt you willingly, but I will not be

taken unless you can assure me against the Saxon lash."

"Fool!" answered Cameron, "you know I can not. Yet I will do all I can. I will say I met you on your return, and the punishment will be light — but give up your musket — Come on, men."

Instantly he rushed forward, extending his arm as if to push aside the young man's levelled firelock. Elspat exclaimed, "Now, spare not your father's blood to defend your father's hearth!" Hamish fired his piece, and Cameron dropped dead. — All these things happened, it might be said, in the same moment of time. The soldiers rushed forward and seized Hamish, who, seeming petrified with what he had done, offered not the least resistance. Not so his mother, who, seeing the men about to put handcuffs on her son, threw herself on the soldiers with such fury that it required two of them to hold her, while the rest secured the prisoner.

"Are you not an accursed creature," said one of the men to Hamish, "to have slain your best friend, who was contriving, during the whole march, how he could find some way of getting you off without punishment for your desertion?"

"Do you hear *that*, mother?" said Hamish, turning himself as much towards her as his bonds would permit — but the mother heard nothing, and saw nothing. She had fainted on the floor of her hut. Without waiting for her recovery, the party almost immediately began their homeward march towards Dumbarton, leading along with them their prisoner. They thought it necessary, however, to stay for a little space at the village of

Dalmally, from which they despatched a party of the inhabitants to bring away the body of their unfortunate leader, while they themselves repaired to a magistrate to state what had happened, and require his instructions as to the further course to be pursued. The crime being of a military character, they were instructed to march the prisoner to Dumbarton without delay.

The swoon of the mother of Hamish lasted for a length of time; the longer perhaps that her constitution, strong as it was, must have been much exhausted by her previous agitation of three days' endurance. She was roused from her stupor at length by female voices, which cried the coronach, or lament for the dead, with clapping of hands and loud exclamations; while the melancholy note of a lament, appropriate to the clan Cameron, played on the bagpipe, was heard from time to time.

Elspat started up like one awakened from the dead, and without any accurate recollection of the scene which had passed before her eyes. There were females in the hut who were swathing the corpse in its bloody plaid before carrying it from the fatal spot. "Women," she said, starting up and interrupting their chant at once and their labour — "Tell me, women, why sing you the dirge of MacDhonuil Dhu in the house of MacTavish Mhor?"

"She-wolf, be silent with thine ill-omened yell," answered one of the females, a relation of the deceased, "and let us do our duty to our beloved kinsman! There shall never be coronach cried, or dirge played, for thee or thy bloody wolf-burd.[1]

[1] Wolf-brood, *i. e.* wolf-cub.

The ravens shall eat him from the gibbet, and the foxes and wild-cats shall tear thy corpse upon the hill. Cursed be he that would sain your bones, or add a stone to your cairn!"

"Daughter of a foolish mother," answered the widow of MacTavish Mhor, "know that the gibbet with which you threaten us is no portion of our inheritance. For thirty years the Black Tree of the Law, whose apples are dead men's bodies, hungered after the beloved husband of my heart; but he died like a brave man, with the sword in his hand, and defrauded it of its hopes and its fruit."

"So shall it not be with thy child, bloody sorceress," replied the female mourner, whose passions were as violent as those of Elspat herself. "The ravens shall tear his fair hair to line their nests, before the sun sinks beneath the Treshornish islands."

These words recalled to Elspat's mind the whole history of the last three dreadful days. At first, she stood fixed as if the extremity of distress had converted her into stone; but in a minute the pride and violence of her temper, outbraved as she thought herself on her own threshold, enabled her to reply — "Yes, insulting hag, my fair-haired boy may die, but it will not be with a white hand — it has been dyed in the blood of his enemy, in the best blood of a Cameron — remember that; and when you lay your dead in his grave, let it be his best epitaph, that he was killed by Hamish Bean for essaying to lay hands on the son of MacTavish Mhor on his own threshold. Farewell — the shame of defeat, loss, and slaughter remain with the clan that has endured it!"

The relative of the slaughtered Cameron raised her voice in reply; but Elspat, disdaining to continue the objurgation, or perhaps feeling her grief likely to overmaster her power of expressing her resentment, had left the hut, and was walking forth in the bright moonshine.

The females who were arranging the corpse of the slaughtered man hurried from their melancholy labour to look after her tall figure as it glided away among the cliffs. "I am glad she is gone," said one of the younger persons who assisted. "I would as soon dress a corpse when the great fiend himself — God sain us — stood visibly before us, as when Elspat of the Tree is amongst us. — Ay — ay, even overmuch intercourse hath she had with the Enemy in her day."

"Silly woman," answered the female who had maintained the dialogue with the departed Elspat, "thinkest thou that there is a worse fiend on earth, or beneath it, than the pride and fury of an offended woman, like yonder bloody-minded hag? Know that blood has been as familiar to her as the dew to the mountain-daisy. Many and many a brave man has she caused to breathe their last for little wrong they had done to her or theirs. But her hough-sinews are cut, now that her wolf-burd must, like a murderer as he is, make a murderer's end."

Whilst the women thus discoursed together, as they watched the corpse of Allan Breack Cameron, the unhappy cause of his death pursued her lonely way across the mountain. While she remained within sight of the bothy, she put a strong constraint on herself, that by no alteration of pace or gesture she might afford to her enemies the

triumph of calculating the excess of her mental agitation, nay, despair. She stalked, therefore, with a slow rather than a swift step, and, holding herself upright, seemed at once to endure with firmness that woe which was passed, and bid defiance to that which was about to come But when she was beyond the sight of those who remained in the hut, she could no longer suppress the extremity of her agitation. Drawing her mantle wildly round her, she stopped at the first knoll, and, climbing to its summit, extended her arms up to the bright moon, as if accusing heaven and earth for her misfortunes, and uttered scream on scream, like those of an eagle whose nest has been plundered of her brood. A while she vented her grief in these inarticulate cries, then rushed on her way with a hasty and unequal step, in the vain hope of overtaking the party which was conveying her son a prisoner to Dumbarton. But her strength, superhuman as it seemed, failed her in the trial, nor was it possible for her, with her utmost efforts, to accomplish her purpose.

Yet she pressed onward, with all the speed which her exhausted frame could exert. When food became indispensable, she entered the first cottage: "Give me to eat," she said; "I am the widow of MacTavish Mhor — I am the mother of Hamish MacTavish Bean — give me to eat, that I may once more see my fair-haired son." Her demand was never refused, though granted in many cases with a kind of struggle between compassion and aversion in some of those to whom she applied, which was in others qualified by fear. The share she had had in occasioning the death of Allan Breack Cameron, which must probably

involve that of her own son, was not accurately known; but, from a knowledge of her violent passions and former habits of life, no one doubted that in one way or other she had been the cause of the catastrophe; and Hamish Bean was considered, in the slaughter which he had committed, rather as the instrument than as the accomplice of his mother.

This general opinion of his countrymen was of little service to the unfortunate Hamish. As his captain, Green Colin, understood the manners and habits of his country, he had no difficulty in collecting from Hamish the particulars accompanying his supposed desertion, and the subsequent death of the non-commissioned officer. He felt the utmost compassion for a youth who had thus fallen a victim to the extravagant and fatal fondness of a parent. But he had no excuse to plead which could rescue his unhappy recruit from the doom which military discipline and the award of a court-martial denounced against him for the crime he had committed.

No time had been lost in their proceedings, and as little was interposed betwixt sentence and execution. General —— had determined to make a severe example of the first deserter who should fall into his power, and here was one who had defended himself by main force, and slain in the affray the officer sent to take him into custody. A fitter subject for punishment could not have occurred, and Hamish was sentenced to immediate execution. All which the interference of his captain in his favour could procure was that he should die a soldier's death; for there had been a purpose of executing him upon the gibbet.

The worthy clergyman of Glenorchy chanced to be at Dumbarton, in attendance upon some church courts, at the time of this catastrophe. He visited his unfortunate parishioner in his dungeon, found him ignorant indeed, but not obstinate, and the answers which he received from him, when conversing on religious topics, were such as induced him doubly to regret that a mind naturally pure and noble should have remained unhappily so wild and uncultivated.

When he ascertained the real character and disposition of the young man, the worthy pastor made deep and painful reflections on his own shyness and timidity, which, arising out of the evil fame that attached to the lineage of Hamish, had restrained him from charitably endeavouring to bring this strayed sheep within the great fold. While the good minister blamed his cowardice in times past, which had deterred him from risking his person, to save, perhaps, an immortal soul, he resolved no longer to be governed by such timid counsels, but to endeavour, by application to his officers, to obtain a reprieve, at least, if not a pardon, for the criminal, in whom he felt so unusually interested, at once from his docility of temper and his generosity of disposition.

Accordingly the divine sought out Captain Campbell at the barracks within the garrison. There was a gloomy melancholy on the brow of Green Colin, which was not lessened, but increased, when the clergyman stated his name, quality, and errand. "You cannot tell me better of the young man than I am disposed to believe," answered the Highland officer; "you cannot ask me to do more in his behalf than I am of myself inclined, and

have already endeavoured to do. But it is all in vain. General —— is half a Lowlander, half an Englishman. He has no idea of the high and enthusiastic character which in these mountains often brings exalted virtues in contact with great crimes, which, however, are less offences of the heart than errors of the understanding. I have gone so far as to tell him that in this young man he was putting to death the best and the bravest of my company, where all, or almost all, are good and brave. I explained to him by what strange delusion the culprit's apparent desertion was occasioned, and how little his heart was accessory to the crime which his hand unhappily committed. His answer was, 'These are Highland visions, Captain Campbell, as unsatisfactory and vain as those of the second sight. An act of gross desertion may, in any case, be palliated under the plea of intoxication; the murder of an officer may be as easily coloured over with that of temporary insanity. The example must be made, and, if it has fallen on a man otherwise a good recruit, it will have the greater effect.' — Such being the General's unalterable purpose," continued Captain Campbell, with a sigh, "be it your care, reverend sir, that your penitent prepare by break of day to-morrow for that great change which we shall all one day be subjected to."

"And for which," said the clergyman, "may God prepare us all, as I in my duty will not be wanting to this poor youth."

Next morning, as the very earliest beams of sunrise saluted the grey towers which crown the summit of that singular and tremendous rock, the soldiers of the new Highland regiment appeared

on the parade, within the Castle of Dumbarton, and, having fallen into order, began to move downward by steep staircases and narrow passages towards the external barrier-gate, which is at the very bottom of the rock. The wild wailings of the pibroch were heard at times, interchanged with the drums and fifes, which beat the Dead March.

The unhappy criminal's fate did not, at first, excite that general sympathy in the regiment which would probably have arisen had he been executed for desertion alone. The slaughter of the unfortunate Allan Breack had given a different colour to Hamish's offence; for the deceased was much beloved, and, besides, belonged to a numerous and powerful clan, of whom there were many in the ranks. The unfortunate criminal, on the contrary, was little known to, and scarcely connected with, any of his regimental companions. His father had been, indeed, distinguished for his strength and manhood; but he was of a broken clan, as those names were called who had no chief to lead them to battle.

It would have been almost impossible in another case to have turned out of the ranks of the regiment the party necessary for execution of the sentence; but the six individuals selected for that purpose were friends of the deceased, descended, like him, from the race of MacDhonuil Dhu; and while they prepared for the dismal task which their duty imposed, it was not without a stern feeling of gratified revenge. The leading company of the regiment began now to defile from the barrier-gate, and was followed by the others, each successively moving and halting according to the orders of the

adjutant, so as to form three sides of an oblong square, with the ranks faced inwards. The fourth or blank side of the square was closed up by the huge and lofty precipice on which the castle rises. About the centre of the procession, bare-headed, disarmed, and with his hands bound, came the unfortunate victim of military law. He was deadly pale, but his step was firm and his eye as bright as ever. The clergyman walked by his side — the coffin which was to receive his mortal remains was borne before him. The looks of his comrades were still, composed, and solemn. They felt for the youth, whose handsome form and manly yet submissive deportment had, as soon as he was distinctly visible to them, softened the hearts of many, even of some who had been actuated by vindictive feelings.

The coffin destined for the yet living body of Hamish Bean was placed at the bottom of the hollow square, about two yards distant from the foot of the precipice, which rises in that place as steep as a stone wall to the height of three or four hundred feet. Thither the prisoner was also led, the clergyman still continuing by his side, pouring forth exhortations of courage and consolation, to which the youth appeared to listen with respectful devotion. With slow and, it seemed, almost unwilling steps, the firing party entered the square, and were drawn up facing the prisoner, about ten yards distant. The clergyman was now about to retire — "Think, my son," he said, "on what I have told you, and let your hope be rested on the anchor which I have given. You will then exchange a short and miserable existence here for a life in which you will experience neither sorrow

nor pain. — Is there aught else which you can intrust to me to execute for you?"

The youth looked at his sleeve-buttons. They were of gold, booty perhaps which his father had taken from some English officer during the civil wars. The clergyman disengaged them from his sleeves.

"My mother!" he said with some effort, "give them to my poor mother! — See her, good father, and teach her what she should think of all this. Tell her Hamish Bean is more glad to die than ever he was to rest after the longest day's hunting. Farewell, sir — farewell!"

The good man could scarce retire from the fatal spot. An officer afforded him the support of his arm. At his last look towards Hamish, he beheld him alive and kneeling on the coffin; the few that were around him had all withdrawn. The fatal word was given, the rock rang sharp to the sound of the discharge, and Hamish, falling forward with a groan, died, it may be supposed, without almost a sense of the passing agony.

Ten or twelve of his own company then came forward, and laid with solemn reverence the remains of their comrade in the coffin, while the Dead March was again struck up, and the several companies, marching in single files, passed the coffin one by one, in order that all might receive from the awful spectacle the warning which it was peculiarly intended to afford. The regiment was then marched off the ground, and reascended the ancient cliff, their music, as usual on such occasions, striking lively strains, as if sorrow, or even deep thought, should as short a while as possible be the tenant of the soldier's bosom.

At the same time the small party which we before mentioned bore the bier of the ill-fated Hamish to his humble grave, in a corner of the churchyard of Dumbarton usually assigned to criminals. Here, among the dust of the guilty, lies a youth whose name, had he survived the ruin of the fatal events by which he was hurried into crime, might have adorned the annals of the brave.

The minister of Glenorchy left Dumbarton immediately after he had witnessed the last scene of this melancholy catastrophe. His reason acquiesced in the justice of the sentence, which required blood for blood, and he acknowledged that the vindictive character of his countrymen required to be powerfully restrained by the strong curb of social law. But still he mourned over the individual victim. Who may arraign the bolt of heaven when it bursts among the sons of the forest; yet who can refrain from mourning, when it selects for the object of its blighting aim the fair stem of a young oak, that promised to be the pride of the dell in which it flourished? Musing on these melancholy events, noon found him engaged in the mountain passes, by which he was to return to his still distant home.

Confident in his knowledge of the country, the clergyman had left the main road, to seek one of those shorter paths which are only used by pedestrians, or by men, like the minister, mounted on the small but sure-footed, hardy, and sagacious horses of the country. The place which he now traversed was in itself gloomy and desolate, and tradition had added to it the terror of superstition, by affirming it was haunted by an evil spirit, termed *Cloght-dearg*, that is, Redmantle, who at all

times, but especially at noon and at midnight, traversed the glen, in enmity both to man and the inferior creation, did such evil as her power was permitted to extend to, and afflicted with ghastly terrors those whom she had not licence otherwise to hurt.

The minister of Glenorchy had set his face in opposition to many of these superstitions, which he justly thought were derived from the dark ages of Popery, perhaps even from those of Paganism, and unfit to be entertained or believed by the Christians of an enlightened age. Some of his more attached parishioners considered him as too rash in opposing the ancient faith of their fathers; and, though they honoured the moral intrepidity of their pastor, they could not avoid entertaining and expressing fears that he would one day fall a victim to his temerity, and be torn to pieces in the glen of the Cloght-dearg, or some of those other haunted wilds which he appeared rather to have a pride and pleasure in traversing alone, on the days and hours when the wicked spirits were supposed to have especial power over man and beast.

These legends came across the mind of the clergyman; and, solitary as he was, a melancholy smile shaded his cheek, as he thought of the inconsistency of human nature, and reflected how many brave men, whom the yell of the pibroch would have sent headlong against fixed bayonets, as the wild bull rushes on his enemy, might have yet feared to encounter those visionary terrors, which he himself, a man of peace, and in ordinary perils no way remarkable for the firmness of his nerves, was now risking without hesitation.

As he looked around the scene of desolation, he

could not but acknowledge, in his own mind, that it was not ill chosen for the haunt of those spirits which are said to delight in solitude and desolation. The glen was so steep and narrow that there was but just room for the meridian sun to dart a few scattered rays upon the gloomy and precarious stream which stole through its recesses, for the most part in silence, but occasionally murmuring sullenly against the rocks and large stones which seemed determined to bar its farther progress. In winter or in the rainy season this small stream was a foaming torrent of the most formidable magnitude, and it was at such periods that it had torn open and laid bare the broad-faced and huge fragments of rock which, at the season of which we speak, hid its course from the eye, and seemed disposed totally to interrupt its course. "Undoubtedly," thought the clergyman, "this mountain rivulet, suddenly swelled by a water-spout or thunder-storm, has often been the cause of those accidents which, happening in the glen called by her name, have been ascribed to the agency of the Cloght-dearg."

Just as this idea crossed his mind, he heard a female voice exclaim, in a wild and thrilling accent, "Michael Tyrie — Michael Tyrie!" He looked round in astonishment, and not without some fear. It seemed for an instant as if the Evil Being, whose existence he had disowned, was about to appear for the punishment of his incredulity. This alarm did not hold him more than an instant, nor did it prevent his replying in a firm voice, "Who calls — and where are you?"

"One who journeys in wretchedness, between life and death," answered the voice; and the

speaker, a tall female, appeared from among the fragments of rocks which had concealed her from view.

As she approached more closely, her mantle of bright tartan, in which the red colour much predominated, her stature, the long stride with which she advanced, and the writhen features and wild eyes which were visible from under her curch, would have made her no inadequate representative of the spirit which gave name to the valley. But Mr. Tyrie instantly knew her as the Woman of the Tree, the widow of MacTavish Mhor, the now childless mother of Hamish Bean. I am not sure whether the minister would not have endured the visitation of the Cloght-dearg herself, rather than the shock of Elspat's presence, considering her crime and her misery. He drew up his horse instinctively, and stood endeavouring to collect his ideas, while a few paces brought her up to his horse's head.

"Michael Tyrie," said she, "the foolish women of the Clachan [1] hold thee as a god — be one to me, and say that my son lives. Say this, and I too will be of thy worship — I will bend my knees on the seventh day in thy house of worship, and thy God shall be my God."

"Unhappy woman," replied the clergyman, "man forms not pactions with his Maker as with a creature of clay like himself. Thinkest thou to chaffer with Him who formed the earth and spread out the heavens, or that thou canst offer aught of homage or devotion that can be worth acceptance in his eyes? He hath asked obedience, not sacrifice; patience under the trials with which he

[1] *i. e.* The village, literally the stones

afflicts us, instead of vain bribes, such as man offers to his changeful brother of clay, that he may be moved from his purpose."

"Be silent, priest!" answered the desperate woman; "speak not to me the words of thy white book. Elspat's kindred were of those who crossed themselves and knelt when the sacring bell was rung; and she knows that atonement can be made on the altar for deeds done in the field. Elspat had once flocks and herds, goats upon the cliffs, and cattle in the strath. She wore gold around her neck and on her hair — thick twists as those worn by the heroes of old. All these would she have resigned to the priest — all these; and if he wished for the ornaments of a gentle lady, or the sporran of a high chief, though they had been great as MacCallum More himself, MacTavish Mhor would have procured them if Elspat had promised them. Elspat is now poor, and has nothing to give. But the Black Abbot of Inchaffray would have bidden her scourge her shoulders and macerate her feet by pilgrimage, and he would have granted his pardon to her when he saw that her blood had flowed, and that her flesh had been torn. These were the priests who had indeed power even with the most powerful — they threatened the great men of the earth with the word of their mouth, the sentence of their book, the blaze of their torch, the sound of their sacring bell. The mighty bent to their will, and unloosed at the word of the priests those whom they had bound in their wrath, and set at liberty, unharmed, him whom they had sentenced to death, and for whose blood they had thirsted. These were a powerful race, and might well ask the poor to kneel, since their power could

humble the proud. But you! — against whom are ye strong, but against women who have been guilty of folly, and men who never wore sword? The priests of old were like the winter torrent which fills this hollow valley, and rolls these massive rocks against each other as easily as the boy plays with the ball which he casts before him — But you! you do but resemble the summer-stricken stream, which is turned aside by the rushes, and stemmed by a bush of sedges — Woe worth you, for there is no help in you!"

The clergyman was at no loss to conceive that Elspat had lost the Roman Catholic faith without gaining any other, and that she still retained a vague and confused idea of the composition with the priesthood, by confession, alms, and penance, and of their extensive power, which, according to her notion, was adequate, if duly propitiated, even to effecting her son's safety. Compassionating her situation, and allowing for her errors and ignorance, he answered her with mildness.

"Alas, unhappy woman! Would to God I could convince thee as easily where thou oughtest to seek, and art sure to find, consolation, as I can assure you with a single word that were Rome and all her priesthood once more in the plenitude of their power, they could not, for largesse or penance, afford to thy misery an atom of aid or comfort. — Elspat MacTavish, I grieve to tell you the news."

"I know them without thy speech," said the unhappy woman — "My son is doomed to die."

"Elspat," resumed the clergyman, "he *was* doomed, and the sentence has been executed." The hapless mother threw her eyes up to heaven, and uttered a shriek so unlike the voice of a

human being, that the eagle which soared in middle air answered it as she would have done the call of her mate.

"It is impossible!" she exclaimed, "it is impossible! Men do not condemn and kill on the same day! Thou art deceiving me. The people call thee holy — hast thou the heart to tell a mother she has murdered her only child?"

"God knows," said the priest, the tears falling fast from his eyes, "that were it in my power I would gladly tell better tidings — But these which I bear are as certain as they are fatal — My own ears heard the death-shot, my own eyes beheld thy son's death — thy son's funeral. — My tongue bears witness to what my ears heard and my eyes saw."

The wretched female clasped her hands close together, and held them up towards heaven like a sibyl announcing war and desolation, while, in impotent yet frightful rage, she poured forth a tide of the deepest imprecations. — "Base Saxon churl!" she exclaimed, "vile hypocritical juggler! May the eyes that looked tamely on the death of my fair-haired boy be melted in their sockets with ceaseless tears, shed for those that are nearest and most dear to thee! May the ears that heard his death-knell be dead hereafter to all other sounds save the screech of the raven and the hissing of the adder! May the tongue that tells me of his death and of my own crime be withered in thy mouth — or, better, when thou wouldst pray with thy people, may the Evil One guide it, and give voice to blasphemies instead of blessings, until men shall fly in terror from thy presence, and the thunder of heaven be launched against thy head,

and stop for ever thy cursing and accursed voice! Begone, with this malison! — Elspat will never, never again bestow so many words upon living man."

She kept her word — from that day the world was to her a wilderness, in which she remained without thought, care, or interest, absorbed in her own grief, indifferent to everything else.

With her mode of life, or rather of existence, the reader is already as far acquainted as I have the power of making him. Of her death I can tell him nothing. It is supposed to have happened several years after she had attracted the attention of my excellent friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol. Her benevolence, which was never satisfied with dropping a sentimental tear when there was room for the operation of effective charity, induced her to make various attempts to alleviate the condition of this most wretched woman. But all her exertions could only render Elspat's means of subsistence less precarious — a circumstance which, though generally interesting even to the most wretched outcasts, seemed to her a matter of total indifference. Every attempt to place any person in her hut to take charge of her miscarried, through the extreme resentment with which she regarded all intrusion on her solitude, or by the timidity of those who had been pitched upon to be inmates with the terrible Woman of the Tree. At length, when Elspat became totally unable (in appearance at least) to turn herself on the wretched settle which served her for a couch, the humanity of Mr. Tyrie's successor sent two women to attend upon the last moments of the solitary, which could not, it was judged, be far distant, and to avert the

possibility that she might perish for want of assistance or food, before she sank under the effects of extreme age or mortal malady.

It was on a November evening that the two women appointed for this melancholy purpose arrived at the miserable cottage which we have already described. Its wretched inmate lay stretched upon the bed, and seemed almost already a lifeless corpse, save for the wandering of the fierce dark eyes, which rolled in their sockets in a manner terrible to look upon, and seemed to watch with surprise and indignation the motions of the strangers, as persons whose presence was alike unexpected and unwelcome. They were frightened at her looks; but, assured in each other's company, they kindled a fire, lighted a candle, prepared food, and made other arrangements for the discharge of the duty assigned them.

The assistants agreed they should watch the bedside of the sick person by turns; but about midnight, overcome by fatigue (for they had walked far that morning), both of them fell fast asleep. When they awoke, which was not till after the interval of some hours, the hut was empty, and the patient gone. They rose in terror, and went to the door of the cottage, which was latched as it had been at night. They looked out into the darkness, and called upon their charge by her name. The night-raven screamed from the old oak-tree, the fox howled on the hill, the hoarse waterfall replied with its echoes, but there was no human answer. The terrified women did not dare to make further search till morning should appear; for the sudden disappearance of a creature so frail as Elspat, together with the wild tenor of her history, inti-

midated them from stirring from the hut. They remained, therefore, in dreadful terror, sometimes thinking they heard her voice without, and, at other times, that sounds of a different description were mingled with the mournful sigh of the night-breeze, or the dash of the cascade. Sometimes, too, the latch rattled, as if some frail and impotent hand were in vain attempting to lift it, and ever and anon they expected the entrance of their terrible patient, animated by supernatural strength, and in the company, perhaps, of some being more dreadful than herself. Morning came at length. They sought brake, rock, and thicket in vain. Two hours after daylight, the minister himself appeared, and, on the report of the watchers, caused the country to be alarmed, and a general and exact search to be made through the whole neighbourhood of the cottage and the oak-tree. But it was all in vain. Elspat MacTavish was never found, whether dead or alive; nor could there ever be traced the slightest circumstance to indicate her fate.

The neighbourhood was divided concerning the cause of her disappearance. The credulous thought that the evil spirit under whose influence she seemed to have acted had carried her away in the body; and there are many who are still unwilling, at untimely hours, to pass the oak-tree, beneath which, as they allege, she may still be seen seated according to her wont. Others less superstitious supposed that had it been possible to search the gulf of the Corri Dhu, the profound deeps of the lake, or the whelming eddies of the river, the remains of Elspat MacTavish might have been discovered; as nothing was more natural, considering

her state of body and mind, than that she should have fallen in by accident, or precipitated herself intentionally into one or other of those places of sure destruction. The clergyman entertained an opinion of his own. He thought that, impatient of the watch which was placed over her, this unhappy woman's instinct had taught her, as it directs various domestic animals, to withdraw herself from the sight of her own race, that the death-struggle might take place in some secret den, where, in all probability, her mortal relics would never meet the eyes of mortals. This species of instinctive feeling seemed to him of a tenor with the whole course of her unhappy life, and most likely to influence her, when it drew to a conclusion.

THE TWO DROVERS.

THE TWO DROVERS.

MR. CROFTANGRY INTRODUCES ANOTHER TALE.

> Together both on the high lawns appeared.
> Under the opening eyelids of the morn
> They drove afield.
>
> *Elegy on Lycidas.*

I HAVE sometimes wondered why all the favourite occupations and pastimes of mankind go to the disturbance of that happy state of tranquillity, that *Otium*, as Horace terms it, which he says is the object of all men's prayers, whether preferred from sea or land; and that the undisturbed repose, of which we are so tenacious, when duty or necessity compels us to abandon it, is precisely what we long to exchange for a state of excitation, as soon as we may prolong it at our own pleasure. Briefly, you have only to say to a man, "Remain at rest," and you instantly inspire the love of labour. The sportsman toils like his gamekeeper, the master of the pack takes as severe exercise as his whipper-in, the statesman or politician drudges more than the professional lawyer; and, to come to my own case, the volunteer author subjects himself to the risk of painful criticism, and the assured certainty of mental and manual labour,

just as completely as his needy brother, whose necessities compel him to assume the pen.

These reflections have been suggested by an annunciation on the part of Janet "that the little Gillie-whitefoot was come from the printing-office."

"Gillie-blackfoot you should call him, Janet," was my response, "for he is neither more nor less than an imp of the devil, come to torment me for *copy*, for so the printers call a supply of manuscript for the press."

"Now, Cot forgie your honour," said Janet; "for it is no like your ainsell to give such names to a faitherless bairn."

"I have got nothing else to give him, Janet — he must wait a little."

"Then I have got some breakfast to give the bit gillie," said Janet; "and he can wait by the fireside in the kitchen, till your honour 's ready; and cood enough for the like of him, if he was to wait your honour's pleasure all day."

"But, Janet," said I to my little active superintendent, on her return to the parlour, after having made her hospitable arrangements, "I begin to find this writing our Chronicles is rather more tiresome than I expected, for here comes this little fellow to ask for manuscript — that is, for something to print — and I have got none to give him."

"Your honour can be at nae loss; I have seen you write fast and fast enough; and for subjects, you have the whole Highlands to write about, and I am sure you know a hundred tales better than that about Hamish MacTavish, for it was but about a young cateran and an auld carline, when all's done; and if they had burned the rudas

queen for a witch, I am thinking, may be, they would not have tyned their coals — and her to gar her neer-do-weel son shoot a gentleman Cameron! I am third cousin to the Camerons mysell — my blood warms to them — And if you want to write about deserters, I am sure there were deserters enough on the top of Arthur's Seat, when the MacRaas broke out, and on that woful day beside Leith Pier — Ohonaree!" ——

Here Janet began to weep, and to wipe her eyes with her apron. For my part, the idea I wanted was supplied, but I hesitated to make use of it. Topics, like times, are apt to become common by frequent use. It is only an ass like Justice Shallow, who would pitch upon the over-scutched tunes which the carmen whistled, and try to pass them off as his *fancies* and his *good-nights*. Now, the Highlands, though formerly a rich mine for original matter, are, as my friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol warned me, in some degree worn out by the incessant labour of modern romancers and novelists, who, finding in those remote regions primitive habits and manners, have vainly imagined that the public can never tire of them; and so kilted Highlanders are to be found as frequently, and nearly of as genuine descent, on the shelves of a circulating library, as at a Caledonian ball. Much might have been made at an earlier time out of the history of a Highland regiment, and the singular revolution of ideas which must have taken place in the minds of those who composed it, when exchanging their native hills for the battle-fields of the Continent, and their simple and sometimes indolent domestic habits for the regular exertions demanded by modern discipline. But the market

is forestalled. There is Mrs. Grant of Laggan has drawn the manners, customs, and superstitions of the mountains in their natural unsophisticated state;[1] and my friend General Stewart of Garth,[2] in giving the real history of the Highland regiments, has rendered any attempt to fill up the sketch with fancy-colouring extremely rash and precarious. Yet I too have still a lingering fancy to add a stone to the cairn; and without calling in imagination to aid the impressions of juvenile recollection, I may just attempt to embody one or two scenes illustrative of the Highland character, and which belong peculiarly to the Chronicles of the Canongate, to the grey-headed eld of whom they are as familiar as to Chrystal Croftangry. Yet I will not go back to the days of clanship and claymores. Have at you, gentle reader, with a tale of Two Drovers. An oyster may be crossed in love, says the gentle Tilburina — and a drover may be touched on a point of honour, says the Chronicler of the Canongate.

[1] "Letters from the Mountains," 3 vols. — "Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders" — "The Highlanders," and other Poems, &c.

[2] The gallant and amiable author of the "History of the Highland Regiments," in whose glorious services his own share had been great, went out Governor of St. Lucia in 1828, and died in that island on the 18th of December 1829 — no man more regretted, or perhaps by a wider circle of friends and acquaintance.

THE TWO DROVERS.

CHAPTER I.

It was the day after Doune Fair when my story commences. It had been a brisk market, several dealers had attended from the northern and midland counties in England, and English money had flown so merrily about as to gladden the hearts of the Highland farmers. Many large droves were about to set off for England, under the protection of their owners, or of the topsmen whom they employed in the tedious, laborious, and responsible office of driving the cattle for many hundred miles, from the market where they had been purchased to the fields or farm-yards where they were to be fattened for the shambles.

The Highlanders in particular are masters of this difficult trade of driving, which seems to suit them as well as the trade of war. It affords exercise for all their habits of patient endurance and active exertion. They are required to know perfectly the drove-roads, which lie over the wildest tracts of the country, and to avoid as much as possible the highways, which distress the feet of the bullocks, and the turnpikes, which annoy the spirit of the drover; whereas on the broad green or grey

track, which leads across the pathless moor, the herd not only move at ease and without taxation, but, if they mind their business, may pick up a mouthful of food by the way. At night, the drovers usually sleep along with their cattle, let the weather be what it will; and many of these hardy men do not once rest under a roof during a journey on foot from Lochaber to Lincolnshire. They are paid very highly, for the trust reposed is of the last importance, as it depends on their prudence, vigilance, and honesty whether the cattle reach the final market in good order, and afford a profit to the grazier. But, as they maintain themselves at their own expense, they are especially economical in that particular. At the period we speak of, a Highland drover was victualled for his long and toilsome journey with a few handfuls of oatmeal and two or three onions, renewed from time to time, and a ram's horn filled with whisky, which he used regularly, but sparingly, every night and morning. His dirk, or *skene-dhu* (*i. e.* black-knife), so worn as to be concealed beneath the arm or by the folds of the plaid, was his only weapon, excepting the cudgel with which he directed the movements of the cattle. A Highlander was never so happy as on these occasions. There was a variety in the whole journey which exercised the Celt's natural curiosity and love of motion; there were the constant change of place and scene, the petty adventures incidental to the traffic, and the intercourse with the various farmers, graziers, and traders, intermingled with occasional merry-makings, not the less acceptable to Donald that they were void of expense; and there was the consciousness of superior skill, for the Highlander, a child

amongst flocks, is a prince amongst herds, and his natural habits induce him to disdain the shepherd's slothful life, so that he feels himself nowhere more at home than when following a gallant drove of his country cattle in the character of their guardian.

Of the number who left Doune in the morning, and with the purpose we have described, not a *glunamie* of them all cocked his bonnet more briskly, or gartered his tartan hose under knee over a pair of more promising *spiogs* (legs), than did Robin Oig M'Combich, called familiarly Robin Oig — that is, Young, or the Lesser, Robin. Though small of stature, as the epithet Oig implies, and not very strongly limbed, he was as light and alert as one of the deer of his mountains. He had an elasticity of step, which in the course of a long march made many a stout fellow envy him; and the manner in which he busked his plaid and adjusted his bonnet argued a consciousness that so smart a John Highlandman as himself would not pass unnoticed among the Lowland lasses. The ruddy cheek, red lips, and white teeth set off a countenance which had gained by exposure to the weather a healthful and hardy rather than a rugged hue. If Robin Oig did not laugh, or even smile frequently, as indeed is not the practice among his countrymen, his bright eyes usually gleamed from under his bonnet with an expression of cheerfulness ready to be turned into mirth.

The departure of Robin Oig was an incident in the little town, in and near which he had many friends, male and female. He was a topping person in his way, transacted considerable business on his own behalf, and was entrusted by the best farmers in the Highlands, in preference to any

other drover in that district. He might have increased his business to any extent had he condescended to manage it by deputy; but except a lad or two, sister's sons of his own, Robin rejected the idea of assistance, conscious, perhaps, how much his reputation depended upon his attending in person to the practical discharge of his duty in every instance. He remained, therefore, contented with the highest premium given to persons of his description, and comforted himself with the hopes that a few journeys to England might enable him to conduct business on his own account, in a manner becoming his birth. For Robin Oig's father, Lachlan M'Combich (or *son of my friend*, his actual clan-surname being M'Gregor), had been so called by the celebrated Rob Roy, because of the particular friendship which had subsisted between the grandsire of Robin and that renowned cateran. Some people even say that Robin Oig derived his Christian name from one as renowned in the wilds of Loch Lomond as ever was his namesake Robin Hood in the precincts of merry Sherwood. "Of such ancestry," as James Boswell says, "who would not be proud?" Robin Oig was proud accordingly; but his frequent visits to England and to the Lowlands had given him tact enough to know that pretensions which still gave him a little right to distinction in his own lonely glen might be both obnoxious and ridiculous if preferred elsewhere. The pride of birth, therefore, was like the miser's treasure, the secret subject of his contemplation, but never exhibited to strangers as a subject of boasting.

Many were the words of gratulation and good-luck which were bestowed on Robin Oig. The judges commended his drove, especially Robin's

own property, which were the best of them. Some thrust out their snuff-mulls for the parting pinch — others tendered the *doch-an-dorrach,* or parting cup. All cried — "Good-luck travel out with you and come home with you. — Give you luck in the Saxon market — brave notes in the *leabhar-dhu*" (black pocket-book), "and plenty of English gold in the *sporran*" (pouch of goat-skin).

The bonny lasses made their adieus more modestly, and more than one, it was said, would have given her best brooch to be certain that it was upon her that his eye last rested as he turned towards the road.

Robin Oig had just given the preliminary "*Hoo-hoo!*" to urge forward the loiterers of the drove when there was a cry behind him.

"Stay, Robin — bide a blink. Here is Janet of Tomahourich — auld Janet, your father's sister."

"Plague on her, for an auld Highland witch and spaewife," said a farmer from the Carse of Stirling; "she'll cast some of her cantrips on the cattle."

"She canna do that," said another sapient of the same profession — "Robin Oig is no the lad to leave any of them, without tying St. Mungo's knot on their tails, and that will put to her speed the best witch that ever flew over Dimayet upon a broomstick."

It may not be indifferent to the reader to know that the Highland cattle are peculiarly liable to be *taken,* or infected, by spells and witchcraft, which judicious people guard against by knitting knots of peculiar complexity on the tuft of hair which terminates the animal's tail.

But the old woman who was the object of the farmer's suspicion seemed only busied about the

drover, without paying any attention to the drove Robin, on the contrary, appeared rather impatient of her presence.

"What auld-world fancy," he said, "has brought you so early from the ingle-side this morning, Muhme? I am sure I bid you good-even, and had your god-speed, last night."

"And left me more siller than the useless old woman will use till you come back again, bird of my bosom," said the sibyl. "But it is little I would care for the food that nourishes me, or the fire that warms me, or for God's blessed sun itself, if aught but weal should happen to the grandson of my father. So let me walk the *deasil* round you, that you may go safe out into the far foreign land, and come safe home."

Robin Oig stopped, half embarrassed, half laughing, and signing to those around that he only complied with the old woman to soothe her humour. In the meantime she traced around him, with wavering steps, the propitiation, which some have thought has been derived from the Druidical mythology. It consists, as is well known, in the person who makes the *deasil* walking three times round the person who is the object of the ceremony, taking care to move according to the course of the sun. At once, however, she stopped short, and exclaimed, in a voice of alarm and horror, "Grandson of my father, there is blood on your hand."

"Hush, for God's sake, aunt," said Robin Oig; "you will bring more trouble on yourself with this Taishataragh" (second sight) "than you will be able to get out of for many a day."

The old woman only repeated, with a ghastly look, "There is blood on your hand, and it is

English blood. The blood of the Gael is richer and redder. Let us see — let us"——

Ere Robin Oig could prevent her, which, indeed, could only have been by positive violence, so hasty and peremptory were her proceedings, she had drawn from his side the dirk which lodged in the folds of his plaid, and held it up, exclaiming, although the weapon gleamed clear and bright in the sun, "Blood, blood — Saxon blood again. Robin Oig M'Combich, go not this day to England!"

"Prutt, trutt," answered Robin Oig, "that will never do neither — it would be next thing to running the country. For shame, Muhme — give me the dirk. You cannot tell by the colour the difference betwixt the blood of a black bullock and a white one, and you speak of knowing Saxon from Gaelic blood. All men have their blood from Adam, Muhme. Give me my skene-dhu, and let me go on my road. I should have been halfway to Stirling brig by this time — Give me my dirk, and let me go."

"Never will I give it to you," said the old woman — "Never will I quit my hold on your plaid, unless you promise me not to wear that unhappy weapon."

The women around him urged him also, saying few of his aunt's words fell to the ground; and as the Lowland farmers continued to look moodily on the scene, Robin Oig determined to close it at any sacrifice.

"Well, then," said the young drover, giving the scabbard of the weapon to Hugh Morrison, "you Lowlanders care nothing for these freats. Keep my dirk for me. I cannot give it you, because it was my father's; but your drove follows ours, and I am content it should be in your keeping, not in mine. — Will this do, Muhme?"

"It must," said the old woman — "that is, if the Lowlander is mad enough to carry the knife."

The strong westlandman laughed aloud.

"Goodwife," said he, "I am Hugh Morrison from Glenae, come of the Manly Morrisons of auld langsyne, that never took short weapon against a man in their lives. And neither needed they: they had their broadswords, and I have this bit supple," showing a formidable cudgel — "for dirking ower the board, I leave that to John Highlandman. — Ye needna snort, none of you Highlanders, and you in especial, Robin. I'll keep the bit knife, if you are feared for the auld spaewife's tale, and give it back to you whenever you want it."

Robin was not particularly pleased with some part of Hugh Morrison's speech; but he had learned in his travels more patience than belonged to his Highland constitution originally, and he accepted the service of the descendant of the Manly Morrisons, without finding fault with the rather depreciating manner in which it was offered.

"If he had not had his morning in his head, and been but a Dumfriesshire hog into the boot, he would have spoken more like a gentleman. But you cannot have more of a sow than a grumph. It's shame my father's knife should ever slash a haggis for the like of him."

Thus saying (but saying it in Gaelic), Robin drove on his cattle, and waved farewell to all behind him. He was in the greater haste, because he expected to join at Falkirk a comrade and brother in profession, with whom he proposed to travel in company.

Robin Oig's chosen friend was a young Englishman, Harry Wakefield by name, well known at

every northern market, and in his way as much famed and honoured as our Highland driver of bullocks. He was nearly six feet high, gallantly formed to keep the rounds at Smithfield, or maintain the ring at a wrestling-match; and although he might have been overmatched, perhaps, among the regular professors of the Fancy, yet, as a yokel or rustic, or a chance customer, he was able to give a bellyful to any amateur of the pugilistic art. Doncaster races saw him in his glory, betting his guinea, and generally successfully; nor was there a main fought in Yorkshire, the feeders being persons of celebrity, at which he was not to be seen, if business permitted. But though a *sprack* lad, and fond of pleasure and its haunts, Harry Wakefield was steady, and not the cautious Robin Oig M'Combich himself was more attentive to the main chance. His holidays were holidays indeed; but his days of work were dedicated to steady and persevering labour. In countenance and temper Wakefield was the model of Old England's merry yeomen, whose clothyard shafts, in so many hundred battles, asserted her superiority over the nations, and whose good sabres, in our own time, are her cheapest and most assured defence. His mirth was readily excited; for, strong in limb and constitution, and fortunate in circumstances, he was disposed to be pleased with everything about him; and such difficulties as he might occasionally encounter were, to a man of his energy, rather matter of amusement than serious annoyance. With all the merits of a sanguine temper, our young English drover was not without his defects. He was irascible, sometimes to the verge of being quarrelsome; and perhaps not the less inclined to bring his disputes to a pugilistic

decision, because he found few antagonists able to stand up to him in the boxing-ring.

It is difficult to say how Harry Wakefield and Robin Oig first became intimates; but it is certain a close acquaintance had taken place betwixt them, although they had apparently few common subjects of conversation or of interest, so soon as their talk ceased to be of bullocks. Robin Oig, indeed, spoke the English language rather imperfectly upon any other topics but stots and kyloes, and Harry Wakefield could never bring his broad Yorkshire tongue to utter a single word of Gaelic. It was in vain Robin spent a whole morning, during a walk over Minch Moor, in attempting to teach his companion to utter, with true precision, the shibboleth *Llhu*, which is the Gaelic for a calf. From Traquair to Murder-cairn the hill rang with the discordant attempts of the Saxon upon the unmanageable monosyllable, and the heartfelt laugh which followed every failure. They had, however, better modes of awakening the echoes; for Wakefield could sing many a ditty to the praise of Moll, Susan, and Cicely, and Robin Oig had a particular gift at whistling interminable pibrochs through all their involutions, and — what was more agreeable to his companion's southern ear — knew many of the northern airs, both lively and pathetic, to which Wakefield learned to pipe a bass. Thus, though Robin could hardly have comprehended his companion's stories about horse-racing and cock-fighting or fox-hunting, and although his own legends of clan-fights and *creaghs*, varied with talk of Highland goblins and fairy folk, would have been caviare to his companion, they contrived nevertheless to find a degree of pleasure in each other's company,

which had for three years back induced them to join company and travel together, when the direction of their journey permitted. Each, indeed, found his advantage in this companionship; for where could the Englishman have found a guide through the Western Highlands like Robin Oig M'Combich? and when they were on what Harry called the *right* side of the Border, his patronage, which was extensive, and his purse, which was heavy, were at all times at the service of his Highland friend, and on many occasions his liberality did him genuine yeoman's service.

CHAPTER II.

Were ever two such loving friends!
How could they disagree?
Oh, thus it was, he loved him dear,
And thought how to requite him,
And having no friend left but he,
He did resolve to fight him.

Duke upon Duke.

THE pair of friends had traversed with their usual cordiality the grassy wilds of Liddesdale, and crossed the opposite part of Cumberland, emphatically called the Waste. In these solitary regions the cattle under the charge of our drovers derived their subsistence chiefly by picking their food as they went along the drove road, or sometimes by the tempting opportunity of a *start and owerloup*, or invasion of the neighbouring pasture, where an occasion presented itself. But now the scene changed before them; they were descending towards a fertile and enclosed country, where no such liberties could be taken with impunity, or without a previous arrangement and bargain with the possessors of the ground. This was more especially the case, as a great northern fair was upon the eve of taking place, where both the Scotch and English drover expected to dispose of a part of their cattle, which it was desirable to produce in the market rested and in good order. Fields were therefore difficult to be obtained, and only upon high terms. This necessity occasioned a tem-

porary separation betwixt the two friends, who went to bargain, each as he could, for the separate accommodation of his herd. Unhappily it chanced that both of them, unknown to each other, thought of bargaining for the ground they wanted on the property of a country gentleman of some fortune, whose estate lay in the neighbourhood. The English drover applied to the bailiff on the property, who was known to him. It chanced that the Cumbrian Squire, who had entertained some suspicions of his manager's honesty, was taking occasional measures to ascertain how far they were well founded, and had desired that any inquiries about his enclosures, with a view to occupy them for a temporary purpose, should be referred to himself. As, however, Mr. Ireby had gone the day before upon a journey of some miles' distance to the northward, the bailiff chose to consider the check upon his full powers as for the time removed, and concluded that he should best consult his master's interest, and perhaps his own, in making an agreement with Harry Wakefield. Meanwhile, ignorant of what his comrade was doing, Robin Oig, on his side, chanced to be overtaken by a good-looking smart little man upon a pony, most knowingly hogged and cropped, as was then the fashion, the rider wearing tight leather breeches and long-necked bright spurs. This cavalier asked one or two pertinent questions about markets and the price of stock. So Robin, seeing him a well-judging civil gentleman, took the freedom to ask him whether he could let him know if there was any grass-land to be let in that neighbourhood, for the temporary accommodation of his drove. He could not have put the question

to more willing ears. The gentleman of the buck-skins was the proprietor, with whose bailiff Harry Wakefield had dealt, or was in the act of dealing.

"Thou art in good luck, my canny Scot," said Mr. Ireby, "to have spoken to me, for I see thy cattle have done their day's work, and I have at my disposal the only field within three miles that is to be let in these parts."

"The drove can pe gang two, three, four miles very pratty weel indeed," said the cautious Highlander; "put what would his honour pe axing for the peasts pe the head, if she was to tak the park for twa or three days?"

"We won't differ, Sawney, if you let me have six stots for winterers, in the way of reason."

"And which peasts wad your honour pe for having?"

"Why — let me see — the two black — the dun one — yon doddy — him with the twisted horn — the brockit — How much by the head?"

"Ah," said Robin, "your honour is a shudge — a real shudge — I couldna have set off the pest six peasts petter mysell, me that ken them as if they were my pairns, puir things."

"Well, how much per head, Sawney," continued Mr. Ireby.

"It was high markets at Doune and Falkirk," answered Robin.

And thus the conversation proceeded, until they had agreed on the *prix juste* for the bullocks, the squire throwing in the temporary accommodation of the enclosure for the cattle into the boot, and Robin making, as he thought, a very good bargain, provided the grass was but tolerable. The squire walked his pony alongside of the drove, partly to

show him the way and see him put into possession of the field, and partly to learn the latest news of the northern markets.

They arrived at the field, and the pasture seemed excellent. But what was their surprise when they saw the bailiff quietly inducting the cattle of Harry Wakefield into the grassy Goshen which had just been assigned to those of Robin Oig M'Combich by the proprietor himself! Squire Ireby set spurs to his horse, dashed up to his servant, and, learning what had passed between the parties, briefly informed the English drover that his bailiff had let the ground without his authority, and that he might seek grass for his cattle wherever he would, since he was to get none there. At the same time he rebuked his servant severely for having transgressed his commands, and ordered him instantly to assist in ejecting the hungry and weary cattle of Harry Wakefield, which were just beginning to enjoy a meal of unusual plenty, and to introduce those of his comrade, whom the English drover now began to consider as a rival.

The feelings which arose in Wakefield's mind would have induced him to resist Mr. Ireby's decision; but every Englishman has a tolerably accurate sense of law and justice, and John Fleecebumpkin, the bailiff, having acknowledged that he had exceeded his commission, Wakefield saw nothing else for it than to collect his hungry and disappointed charge, and drive them on to seek quarters elsewhere. Robin Oig saw what had happened with regret, and hastened to offer to his English friend to share with him the disputed possession. But Wakefield's pride was severely hurt, and he answered disdainfully, "Take it all, man

— take it all — never make two bites of a cherry — thou canst talk over the gentry, and blear a plain man's eye — Out upon you, man — I would not kiss any man's dirty latchets for leave to bake in his oven."

Robin Oig, sorry but not surprised at his comrade's displeasure, hastened to entreat his friend to wait but an hour till he had gone to the squire's house to receive payment for the cattle he had sold, and he would come back and help him to drive the cattle into some convenient place of rest, and explain to him the whole mistake they had both of them fallen into. But the Englishman continued indignant: "Thou hast been selling, hast thou? Ay, ay — thou is a cunning lad for kenning the hours of bargaining. Go to the devil with thyself, for I will ne'er see thy fause loon's visage again — thou should be ashamed to look me in the face."

"I am ashamed to look no man in the face," said Robin Oig, something moved; "and, moreover, I will look you in the face this blessed day, if you will bide at the clachan down yonder."

"Mayhap you had as well keep away," said his comrade; and, turning his back on his former friend, he collected his unwilling associates, assisted by the bailiff, who took some real and some affected interest in seeing Wakefield accommodated.

After spending some time in negotiating with more than one of the neighbouring farmers, who could not, or would not, afford the accommodation desired, Henry Wakefield at last, and in his necessity, accomplished his point by means of the landlord of the alehouse at which Robin Oig and he

had agreed to pass the night, when they first separated from each other. Mine host was content to let him turn his cattle on a piece of barren moor, at a price little less than the bailiff had asked for the disputed enclosure; and the wretchedness of the pasture, as well as the price paid for it, were set down as exaggerations of the breach of faith and friendship of his Scottish crony. This turn of Wakefield's passions was encouraged by the bailiff (who had his own reasons for being offended against poor Robin, as having been the unwitting cause of his falling into disgrace with his master), as well as by the innkeeper, and two or three chance guests, who stimulated the drover in his resentment against his quondam associate — some from the ancient grudge against the Scots, which, when it exists anywhere, is to be found lurking in the Border counties, and some from the general love of mischief which characterises mankind in all ranks of life, to the honour of Adam's children be it spoken. Good John Barleycorn, also, who always heightens and exaggerates the prevailing passions, be they angry or kindly, was not wanting in his offices on this occasion; and confusion to false friends and hard masters was pledged in more than one tankard.

In the meanwhile Mr. Ireby found some amusement in detaining the northern drover at his ancient hall. He caused a cold round of beef to be placed before the Scot in the butler's pantry, together with a foaming tankard of home-brewed, and took pleasure in seeing the hearty appetite with which these unwonted edibles were discussed by Robin Oig M'Combich. The squire himself, lighting his pipe, compounded between his patri-

cian dignity and his love of agricultural gossip by walking up and down while he conversed with his guest.

"I passed another drove," said the squire, "with one of your countrymen behind them — they were something less beasts than your drove, doddies most of them — a big man was with them — none of your kilts though, but a decent pair of breeches — D'ye know who he may be?"

"Hout aye — that might, could, and would be Hughie Morrison — I didna think he could hae peen sae weel up. He has made a day on us; but his Argyleshires will have wearied shanks. How far was he pehind?"

"I think about six or seven miles," answered the squire, "for I passed them at the Christenbury Crag, and I overtook you at the Hollan Bush. If his beasts be leg-weary, he will be maybe selling bargains."

"Na, na, Hughie Morrison is no the man for pargains — ye maun come to some Highland body like Robin Oig hersell for the like of these — put I maun pe wishing you goot night, and twenty of them let alane ane, and I maun down to the clachan to see if the lad Harry Waakfelt is out of his humdudgeons yet."

The party at the alehouse were still in full talk, and the treachery of Robin Oig still the theme of conversation, when the supposed culprit entered the apartment. His arrival, as usually happens in such a case, put an instant stop to the discussion of which he had furnished the subject, and he was received by the company assembled with that chilling silence which, more than a thousand exclamations, tells an intruder that he is

unwelcome. Surprised and offended, but not appalled by the reception which he experienced, Robin entered with an undaunted and even a haughty air, attempted no greeting, as he saw he was received with none, and placed himself by the side of the fire, a little apart from a table, at which Harry Wakefield, the bailiff, and two or three other persons, were seated. The ample Cumbrian kitchen would have afforded plenty of room, even for a larger separation.

Robin, thus seated, proceeded to light his pipe, and call for a pint of twopenny.

"We have no twopence ale," answered Ralph Heskett, the landlord; "but as thou find'st thy own tobacco, it's like thou mayst find thy own liquor too — it's the wont of thy country, I wot."

"Shame, goodman," said the landlady, a blithe bustling housewife, hastening herself to supply the guest with liquor — "Thou knowest well enow what the strange man wants, and it's thy trade to be civil, man. Thou shouldst know that if the Scot likes a small pot he pays a sure penny."

Without taking any notice of this nuptial dialogue, the Highlander took the flagon in his hand, and, addressing the company generally, drank the interesting toast of "Good markets" to the party assembled.

"The better that the wind blew fewer dealers from the north," said one of the farmers, "and fewer Highland runts to eat up the English meadows."

"Saul of my pody, put you are wrang there, my friend," answered Robin, with composure; "it is your fat Englishmen that eat up our Scots cattle, puir things."

"I wish there was a summat to eat up their drovers," said another; "a plain Englishman canna make bread within a kenning of them."

"Or an honest servant keep his master's favour, but they will come sliding in between him and the sunshine," said the bailiff.

"If these pe jokes," said Robin Oig, with the same composure, "there is ower mony jokes upon one man."

"It is no joke, but downright earnest," said the bailiff. "Harkye, Mr. Robin Ogg, or whatever is your name, it's right we should tell you that we are all of one opinion, and that is, that you, Mr. Robin Ogg, have behaved to our friend Mr. Harry Wakefield here like a raff and a blackguard."

"Nae doubt, nae doubt," answered Robin, with great composure; "and you are a set of very pretty judges, for whose prains or pehaviour I wad not gie a pinch of sneeshing. If Mr. Harry Waakfelt kens where he is wranged, he kens where he may be righted."

"He speaks truth," said Wakefield, who had listened to what passed, divided between the offence which he had taken at Robin's late behaviour and the revival of his habitual feelings of regard.

He now rose and went towards Robin, who got up from his seat as he approached and held out his hand.

"That's right, Harry — go it — serve him out," resounded on all sides — "tip him the nailer — show him the mill."

"Hold your peace all of you, and be ——," said Wakefield; and then, addressing his comrade, he took him by the extended hand, with something

alike of respect and defiance. "Robin," he said, "thou hast used me ill enough this day; but if you mean, like a frank fellow, to shake hands, and take a tussle for love on the sod, why, I'll forgie thee, man, and we shall be better friends than ever."

"And would it not pe petter to pe cood friends without more of the matter?" said Robin. "We will be much petter friendships with our panes hale than proken."

Harry Wakefield dropped the hand of his friend, or rather threw it from him.

"I did not think I had been keeping company for three years with a coward."

"Coward pelongs to none of my name," said Robin, whose eyes began to kindle, but keeping the command of his temper. "It was no coward's legs or hands, Harry Waakfelt, that drew you out of the fords of Frew, when you was drifting ower the plack rock, and every eel in the river expected his share of you."

"And that is true enough, too," said the Englishman, struck by the appeal.

"Adzooks!" exclaimed the bailiff. "Sure Harry Wakefield, the nattiest lad at Whitson Tryste, Wooler Fair, Carlisle Sands, or Stagshaw Bank, is not going to show white feather? Ah, this comes of living so long with kilts and bonnets — men forget the use of their daddles."

"I may teach you, Master Fleecebumpkin, that I have not lost the use of mine," said Wakefield, and then went on. "This will never do, Robin. We must have a turn-up, or we shall be the talk of the country side. I'll be d—d if I hurt thee — I'll put on the gloves, gin thou like. Come, stand forward like a man."

"To be peaten like a dog," said Robin. "Is there any reason in that? If you think I have done you wrong, I'll go before your shudge, though I neither know his law nor his language."

A general cry of "No, no — no law, no lawyer! a bellyful and be friends," was echoed by the bystanders.

"But," continued Robin, "if I am to fight, I have no skill to fight like a jackanapes, with hands and nails."

"How would you fight, then?" said his antagonist; "though I am thinking it would be hard to bring you to the scratch anyhow."

"I would fight with proadswords, and sink point on the first plood drawn — like a gentlemans."

A loud shout of laughter followed the proposal, which indeed had rather escaped from poor Robin's swelling heart than been the dictate of his sober judgment.

"Gentleman, quotha!" was echoed on all sides, with a shout of unextinguishable laughter; "a very pretty gentleman, God wot — Canst get two swords for the gentlemen to fight with, Ralph Heskett?"

"No, but I can send to the armoury at Carlisle, and lend them two forks to be making shift with in the meantime."

"Tush, man," said another, "the bonny Scots come into the world with the blue bonnet on their heads, and dirk and pistol at their belt."

"Best send post," said Mr Fleecebumpkin, "to the Squire of Corby Castle, to come and stand second to the *gentleman*."

In the midst of this torrent of general ridicule, the Highlander instinctively griped beneath the folds of his plaid.

"But it's better not," he said in his own language. "A hundred curses on the swine-eaters, who know neither decency nor civility!"

"Make room, the pack of you," he said, advancing to the door.

But his former friend interposed his sturdy bulk, and opposed his leaving the house; and when Robin Oig attempted to make his way by force, he hit him down on the floor, with as much ease as a boy bowls down a nine-pin.

"A ring, a ring!" was now shouted, until the dark rafters, and the hams that hung on them, trembled again, and the very platters on the *bink* clattered against each other. "Well done, Harry" —"Give it him home, Harry" —"Take care of him now — he sees his own blood!"

Such were the exclamations, while the Highlander, starting from the ground, all his coldness and caution lost in frantic rage, sprang at his antagonist with the fury, the activity, and the vindictive purpose of an incensed tiger-cat. But when could rage encounter science and temper? Robin Oig again went down in the unequal contest; and as the blow was necessarily a severe one, he lay motionless on the floor of the kitchen. The landlady ran to offer some aid, but Mr. Fleecebumpkin would not permit her to approach.

"Let him alone," he said; "he will come to within time, and come up to the scratch again. He has not got half his broth yet."

"He has got all I mean to give him, though," said his antagonist, whose heart began to relent towards his old associate; "and I would rather by half give the rest to yourself, Mr. Fleecebumpkin, for you pretend to know a thing or two, and Robin

had not art enough even to peel before setting to, but fought with his plaid dangling about him.—Stand up, Robin, my man! all friends now; and let me hear the man that will speak a word against you, or your country, for your sake."

Robin Oig was still under the dominion of his passion, and eager to renew the onset; but being withheld on the one side by the peace-making Dame Heskett, and on the other aware that Wakefield no longer meant to renew the combat, his fury sank into gloomy sullenness.

"Come, come, never grudge so much at it, man," said the brave-spirited Englishman, with the placability of his country; "shake hands, and we will be better friends than ever."

"Friends!" exclaimed Robin Oig with strong emphasis — "friends! — Never. Look to yourself, Harry Waakfelt."

"Then the curse of Cromwell on your proud Scots stomach, as the man says in the play, and you may do your worst, and be d—d; for one man can say nothing more to another after a tussle than that he is sorry for it."

On these terms the friends parted. Robin Oig drew out, in silence, a piece of money, threw it on the table, and then left the alehouse. But turning at the door, he shook his hand at Wakefield, pointing with his forefinger upwards, in a manner which might imply either a threat or a caution. He then disappeared in the moonlight.

Some words passed after his departure between the bailiff, who piqued himself on being a little of a bully, and Harry Wakefield, who, with generous inconsistency, was now not indisposed to begin a new combat in defence of Robin Oig's

reputation, "although he could not use his daddles like an Englishman, as it did not come natural to him." But Dame Heskett prevented this second quarrel from coming to a head by her peremptory interference. "There should be no more fighting in her house," she said; "there had been too much already. — And you, Mr. Wakefield, may live to learn," she added, "what it is to make a deadly enemy out of a good friend."

"Pshaw, dame! Robin Oig is an honest fellow, and will never keep malice."

"Do not trust to that — you do not know the dour temper of the Scots, though you have dealt with them so often. I have a right to know them, my mother being a Scot."

"And so is well seen on her daughter," said Ralph Heskett.

This nuptial sarcasm gave the discourse another turn; fresh customers entered the tap-room or kitchen, and others left it. The conversation turned on the expected markets, and the report of prices from different parts both of Scotland and England — treaties were commenced, and Harry Wakefield was lucky enough to find a chap for a part of his drove, and at a very considerable profit; an event of consequence more than sufficient to blot out all remembrances of the unpleasant scuffle in the earlier part of the day. But there remained one party from whose mind that recollection could not have been wiped away by the possession of every head of cattle betwixt Esk and Eden.

This was Robin Oig M'Combich. — "That I should have had no weapon," he said, "and for the first time in my life! — Blighted be the tongue that bids the Highlander part with the

dirk — the dirk — ha! the English blood! — My Muhme's word — when did her word fall to the ground?"

The recollection of the fatal prophecy confirmed the deadly intention which instantly sprang up in his mind.

"Ha! Morrison cannot be many miles behind; and if it were a hundred, what then?"

His impetuous spirit had now a fixed purpose and motive of action, and he turned the light foot of his country towards the wilds, through which he knew, by Mr. Ireby's report, that Morrison was advancing. His mind was wholly engrossed by the sense of injury — injury sustained from a friend; and by the desire of vengeance on one whom he now accounted his most bitter enemy. The treasured ideas of self-importance and self-opinion, of ideal birth and quality, had become more precious to him (like the hoard to the miser), because he could only enjoy them in secret. But that hoard was pillaged, the idols which he had secretly worshipped had been desecrated and profaned. Insulted, abused, and beaten, he was no longer worthy, in his own opinion, of the name he bore, or the lineage which he belonged to — nothing was left to him — nothing but revenge; and, as the reflection added a galling spur to every step, he determined it should be as sudden and signal as the offence.

When Robin Oig left the door of the alehouse, seven or eight English miles at least lay betwixt Morrison and him. The advance of the former was slow, limited by the sluggish pace of his cattle; the last left behind him stubble-field and hedge-row, crag and dark heath, all glittering

with frost-rime in the broad November moonlight, at the rate of six miles an hour. And now the distant lowing of Morrison's cattle is heard; and now they are seen creeping like moles in size and slowness of motion on the broad face of the moor; and now he meets them — passes them, and stops their conductor.

"May good betide us," said the Southlander — "Is this you, Robin M'Combich, or your wraith?"

"It is Robin Oig M'Combich," answered the Highlander, "and it is not. — But never mind that, put pe giving me the skene-dhu."

"What! you are for back to the Highlands — The devil! — Have you selt all off before the fair? This beats all for quick markets!"

"I have not sold — I am not going north — May pe I will never go north again. — Give me pack my dirk, Hugh Morrison, or there will pe words petween us."

"Indeed, Robin, I'll be better advised before I gie it back to you — it is a wanchancy weapon in a Highlandman's hand, and I am thinking you will be about some barns-breaking."

"Prutt, trutt! let me have my weapon," said Robin Oig impatiently.

"Hooly and fairly," said his well-meaning friend. "I'll tell you what will do better than these dirking doings — Ye ken Highlander, and Lowlander, and Border-men are a' ae man's bairns when you are over the Scots dyke. See, the Eskdale callants, and fighting Charlie of Liddesdale, and the Lockerbie lads, and the four Dandies of Lustruther, and a wheen mair grey plaids, are coming up behind; and if you are wranged, there is the hand of a Manly Morrison, we'll see you

righted, if Carlisle and Stanwix baith took up the feud."

"To tell you the truth," said Robin Oig, desirous of eluding the suspicions of his friend, "I have enlisted with a party of the Black Watch, and must march off to-morrow morning."

"Enlisted! Were you mad or drunk? — You must buy yourself off — I can lend you twenty notes, and twenty to that, if the drove sell."

"I thank you — thank ye, Hughie; but I go with good will the gate that I am going — so the dirk — the dirk!"

"There it is for you, then, since less wunna serve. But think on what I was saying. — Waes me, it will be sair news in the braes of Balquhidder, that Robin Oig M'Combich should have run an ill gate, and ta'en on."

"Ill news in Balquhidder, indeed!" echoed poor Robin: "but Cot speed you, Hughie, and send you good marcats. Ye winna meet with Robin Oig again, either at tryste or fair."

So saying, he shook hastily the hand of his acquaintance, and set out in the direction from which he had advanced, with the spirit of his former pace.

"There is something wrang with the lad," muttered the Morrison to himself; "but we will maybe see better into it the morn's morning."

But long ere the morning dawned the catastrophe of our tale had taken place. It was two hours after the affray had happened, and it was totally forgotten by almost every one, when Robin Oig returned to Heskett's inn. The place was filled at once by various sorts of men, and with noises corresponding to their character. There

were the grave low sounds of men engaged in busy traffic, with the laugh, the song, and the riotous jest of those who had nothing to do but to enjoy themselves. Among the last was Harry Wakefield, who, amidst a grinning group of smockfrocks, hobnailed shoes, and jolly English physiognomies, was trolling forth the old ditty,

> What though my name be Roger,
> Who drives the plough and cart —

when he was interrupted by a well-known voice saying in a high and stern voice, marked by the sharp Highland accent, "Harry Waakfelt — if you be a man stand up!"

"What is the matter? What is it?" the guests demanded of each other.

"It is only a d—d Scotsman," said Fleecebumpkin, who was by this time very drunk, "whom Harry Wakefield helped to his broth to-day, who is now come to have *his cauld kail* het again."

"Harry Waakfelt," repeated the same ominous summons, "stand up, if you be a man!"

There is something in the tone of deep and concentrated passion which attracts attention and imposes awe, even by the very sound. The guests shrank back on every side, and gazed at the Highlander as he stood in the middle of them, his brows bent and his features rigid with resolution.

"I will stand up with all my heart, Robin, my boy, but it shall be to shake hands with you, and drink down all unkindness. It is not the fault of your heart, man, that you don't know how to clench your hands."

By this time he stood opposite to his antago-

nist; his open and unsuspecting look strangely contrasted with the stern purpose which gleamed wild, dark, and vindictive in the eyes of the Highlander.

"'Tis not thy fault, man, that, not having the luck to be an Englishman, thou canst not fight more than a school-girl."

"I *can* fight," answered Robin Oig sternly, but calmly, "and you shall know it. You, Harry Waakfelt, showed me to-day how the Saxon churls fight — I show you now how the Highland dunnie-wassel fights."

He seconded the word with the action, and plunged the dagger, which he suddenly displayed, into the broad breast of the English yeoman, with such fatal certainty and force that the hilt made a hollow sound against the breast-bone, and the double-edged point split the very heart of his victim. Harry Wakefield fell and expired with a single groan. His assassin next seized the bailiff by the collar, and offered the bloody poniard to his throat, whilst dread and surprise rendered the man incapable of defence.

"It were very just to lay you beside him," he said, "but the blood of a base pickthank shall never mix on my father's dirk with that of a brave man."

As he spoke, he cast the man from him with so much force that he fell on the floor, while Robin, with his other hand, threw the fatal weapon into the blazing turf-fire.

"There," he said, "take me who likes — and let fire cleanse blood if it can."

The pause of astonishment still continuing, Robin Oig asked for a peace-officer, and, a con-

stable having stepped out, he surrendered himself to his custody.

"A bloody night's work you have made of it," said the constable.

"Your own fault," said the Highlander. "Had you kept his hands off me twa hours since, he would have been now as well and merry as he was twa minutes since."

"It must be sorely answered," said the peace-officer.

"Never you mind that — death pays all debts; it will pay that too."

The horror of the bystanders began now to give way to indignation; and the sight of a favourite companion murdered in the midst of them, the provocation being, in their opinion, so utterly inadequate to the excess of vengeance, might have induced them to kill the perpetrator of the deed even upon the very spot. The constable, however, did his duty on this occasion, and, with the assistance of some of the more reasonable persons present, procured horses to guard the prisoner to Carlisle, to abide his doom at the next assizes. While the escort was preparing, the prisoner neither expressed the least interest nor attempted the slightest reply. Only, before he was carried from the fatal apartment, he desired to look at the dead body, which, raised from the floor, had been deposited upon the large table (at the head of which Harry Wakefield had presided but a few minutes before, full of life, vigour, and animation), until the surgeons should examine the mortal wound. The face of the corpse was decently covered with a napkin. To the surprise and horror of the bystanders, which displayed itself in

a general *Ah!* drawn through clenched teeth and half-shut lips, Robin Oig removed the cloth, and gazed with a mournful but steady eye on the lifeless visage, which had been so lately animated that the smile of good-humoured confidence in his own strength, of conciliation at once, and contempt towards his enemy, still curled his lip. While those present expected that the wound, which had so lately flooded the apartment with gore, would send forth fresh streams at the touch of the homicide, Robin Oig replaced the covering, with the brief exclamation, "He was a pretty man!"

My story is nearly ended. The unfortunate Highlander stood his trial at Carlisle. I was myself present, and as a young Scottish lawyer, or barrister at least, and reputed a man of some quality, the politeness of the Sheriff of Cumberland offered me a place on the bench. The facts of the case were proved in the manner I have related them; and whatever might be at first the prejudice of the audience against a crime so un-English as that of assassination from revenge, yet when the rooted national prejudices of the prisoner had been explained, which made him consider himself as stained with indelible dishonour, when subjected to personal violence; when his previous patience, moderation, and endurance were considered, the generosity of the English audience was inclined to regard his crime as the wayward aberration of a false idea of honour rather than as flowing from a heart naturally savage, or perverted by habitual vice. I shall never forget the charge of the venerable judge to the jury, although not at that time liable to be much affected either by that which was eloquent or pathetic.

"We have had," he said, "in the previous part of our duty" (alluding to some former trials) "to discuss crimes which infer disgust and abhorrence, while they call down the well-merited vengeance of the law. It is now our still more melancholy task to apply its salutary though severe enactments to a case of a very singular character, in which the crime (for a crime it is, and a deep one) arose less out of the malevolence of the heart than the error of the understanding — less from any idea of committing wrong than from an unhappily perverted notion of that which is right. Here we have two men, highly esteemed, it has been stated, in their rank of life, and attached, it seems, to each other as friends, one of whose lives has been already sacrificed to a punctilio, and the other is about to prove the vengeance of the offended laws; and yet both may claim our commiseration at least, as men acting in ignorance of each other's national prejudices, and unhappily misguided rather than voluntarily erring from the path of right conduct.

"In the original cause of the misunderstanding we must in justice give the right to the prisoner at the bar. He had acquired possession of the enclosure, which was the object of competition, by a legal contract with the proprietor, Mr. Ireby; and yet, when accosted with reproaches undeserved in themselves, and galling doubtless to a temper at least sufficiently susceptible of passion, he offered notwithstanding to yield up half his acquisition, for the sake of peace and good neighbourhood, and his amicable proposal was rejected with scorn. Then follows the scene at Mr. Heskett the publican's, and you will observe how

the stranger was treated by the deceased, and, I am sorry to observe, by those around, who seem to have urged him in a manner which was aggravating in the highest degree. While he asked for peace and for composition, and offered submission to a magistrate, or to a mutual arbiter, the prisoner was insulted by a whole company, who seem on this occasion to have forgotten the national maxim of 'fair play'; and while attempting to escape from the place in peace, he was intercepted, struck down, and beaten to the effusion of his blood.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, it was with some impatience that I heard my learned brother, who opened the case for the crown, give an unfavourable turn to the prisoner's conduct on this occasion. He said the prisoner was afraid to encounter his antagonist in fair fight, or to submit to the laws of the ring; and that therefore, like a cowardly Italian, he had recourse to his fatal stiletto, to murder the man whom he dared not meet in manly encounter. I observed the prisoner shrink from this part of the accusation with the abhorrence natural to a brave man; and as I would wish to make my words impressive, when I point his real crime, I must secure his opinion of my impartiality, by rebutting everything that seems to me a false accusation. There can be no doubt that the prisoner is a man of resolution — too much resolution — I wish to Heaven that he had less, or rather that he had had a better education to regulate it.

"Gentlemen, as to the laws my brother talks of, they may be known in the bull-ring, or the bear-garden, or the cockpit, but they are not known here. Or, if they should be so far admitted as

furnishing a species of proof that no malice was intended in this sort of combat, from which fatal accidents do sometimes arise, it can only be so admitted when both parties are *in pari casu*, equally acquainted with, and equally willing to refer themselves to, that species of arbitrament. But will it be contended that a man of superior rank and education is to be subjected, or is obliged to subject himself, to this coarse and brutal strife, perhaps in opposition to a younger, stronger, or more skilful opponent? Certainly even the pugilistic code, if founded upon the fair play of Merry Old England, as my brother alleges it to be, can contain nothing so preposterous. And, gentlemen of the jury, if the laws would support an English gentleman, wearing, we will suppose, his sword, in defending himself by force against a violent personal aggression of the nature offered to this prisoner, they will not less protect a foreigner and a stranger, involved in the same unpleasing circumstances. If, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, when thus pressed by a *vis major*, the object of obloquy to a whole company, and of direct violence from one at least, and, as he might reasonably apprehend, from more, the panel had produced the weapon which his countrymen, as we are informed, generally carry about their persons, and the same unhappy circumstance had ensued which you have heard detailed in evidence, I could not in my conscience have asked from you a verdict of murder. The prisoner s personal defence might indeed, even in that case, have gone more or less beyond the *moderamen inculpatæ tutelæ*, spoken of by lawyers, but the punishment incurred would have been that of manslaughter, not of

murder. I beg leave to add that I should have thought this milder species of charge was demanded in the case supposed, notwithstanding the statute of James I. cap. 8, which takes the case of slaughter by stabbing with a short weapon, even without malice prepense, out of the benefit of clergy. For this statute of stabbing, as it is termed, arose out of a temporary cause; and as the real guilt is the same, whether the slaughter be committed by the dagger or by sword or pistol, the benignity of the modern law places them all on the same, or nearly the same, footing.

"But, gentlemen of the jury, the pinch of the case lies in the interval of two hours interposed betwixt the reception of the injury and the fatal retaliation. In the heat of affray and *chaude mêlée*, law, compassionating the infirmities of humanity, makes allowance for the passions which rule such a stormy moment — for the sense of present pain, for the apprehension of further injury, for the difficulty of ascertaining with due accuracy the precise degree of violence which is necessary to protect the person of the individual, without annoying or injuring the assailant more than is absolutely necessary. But the time necessary to walk twelve miles, however speedily performed, was an interval sufficient for the prisoner to have recollected himself; and the violence with which he carried his purpose into effect, with so many circumstances of deliberate determination, could neither be induced by the passion of anger, nor that of fear. It was the purpose and the act of predetermined revenge, for which law neither can, will, nor ought to have sympathy or allowance.

"It is true, we may repeat to ourselves, in alle-

viation of this poor man's unhappy action, that his case is a very peculiar one. The country which he inhabits was, in the days of many now alive, inaccessible to the laws, not only of England, which have not even yet penetrated thither, but to those to which our neighbours of Scotland are subjected, and which must be supposed to be, and no doubt actually are, founded upon the general principles of justice and equity which pervade every civilised country. Amongst their mountains, as among the North American Indians, the various tribes were wont to make war upon each other, so that each man was obliged to go armed for his own protection. These men, from the ideas which they entertained of their own descent and of their own consequence, regarded themselves as so many cavaliers or men-at-arms, rather than as the peasantry of a peaceful country. Those laws of the ring, as my brother terms them, were unknown to the race of warlike mountaineers; that decision of quarrels by no other weapons than those which nature has given every man must to them have seemed as vulgar and as preposterous as to the noblesse of France. Revenge, on the other hand, must have been as familiar to their habits of society as to those of the Cherokees or Mohawks. It is indeed, as described by Bacon, at bottom a kind of wild untutored justice; for the fear of retaliation must withhold the hands of the oppressor where there is no regular law to check daring violence. But though all this may be granted, and though we may allow that, such having been the case of the Highlands in the days of the prisoner's fathers, many of the opinions and sentiments must still continue to influence the

present generation, it cannot, and ought not, even in this most painful case, to alter the administration of the law, either in your hands, gentlemen of the jury, or in mine. The first object of civilisation is to place the general protection of the law, equally administered, in the room of that wild justice which every man cut and carved for himself according to the length of his sword and the strength of his arm. The law says to the subjects, with a voice only inferior to that of the Deity, 'Vengeance is mine.' The instant that there is time for passion to cool and reason to interpose, an injured party must become aware that the law assumes the exclusive cognisance of the right and wrong betwixt the parties, and opposes her inviolable buckler to every attempt of the private party to right himself. I repeat that this unhappy man ought personally to be the object rather of our pity than our abhorrence, for he failed in his ignorance, and from mistaken notions of honour. But his crime is not the less that of murder, gentlemen, and, in your high and important office, it is your duty so to find. Englishmen have their angry passions as well as Scots; and should this man's action remain unpunished, you may unsheath, under various pretences, a thousand daggers betwixt the Land's-end and the Orkneys."

The venerable judge thus ended what, to judge by his apparent emotion, and by the tears which filled his eyes, was really a painful task. The jury, according to his instructions, brought in a verdict of guilty; and Robin Oig M'Combich, *alias* M'Gregor, was sentenced to death, and left for execution, which took place accordingly. He met his fate with great firmness, and acknowledged

the justice of his sentence. But he repelled indignantly the observations of those who accused him of attacking an unarmed man. "I give a life for the life I took," he said, "and what can I do more?" [1]

[1] Note XI. — Robert Donn's Poems.

MY AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR.

INTRODUCTION.

The species of publication which has come to be generally known by the title of *Annual*, being a miscellany of prose and verse, equipped with numerous engravings, and put forth every year about Christmas, had flourished for a long while in Germany, before it was imitated in this country by an enterprising bookseller, a German by birth, Mr. Ackermann. The rapid success of his work, as is the custom of the time, gave birth to a host of rivals, and, among others, to an annual styled "The Keepsake," the first volume of which appeared in 1828, and attracted much notice, chiefly in consequence of the very uncommon splendour of its illustrative accompaniments. The expenditure which the spirited proprietors lavished on this magnificent volume is understood to have been not less than from ten to twelve thousand pounds sterling!

Various gentlemen, of such literary reputation that any one might think it an honour to be associated with them, had been announced as contributors to this Annual before application was made to me to assist in it; and I accordingly placed with much pleasure at the Editor's disposal a few fragments, originally designed to have been worked into the Chronicles of the Canongate, besides a MS. Drama, the long-neglected performance of my youthful days — "The House of Aspen."

"The Keepsake" for 1828 included, however, only three of these little prose tales — of which the first in

order was that entitled "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror." By way of *introduction* to this, when now included in a general collection of my lucubrations, I have only to say that it is a mere transcript, or at least with very little embellishment, of a story that I remembered being struck with in my childhood, when told at the fireside by a lady of eminent virtues, and no inconsiderable share of talent, one of the ancient and honourable house of Swinton. (*f*) She was a kind relation of my own, and met her death in a manner so shocking, being killed in a fit of insanity by a female attendant who had been attached to her person for half a lifetime, that I cannot now recall her memory, child as I was when the catastrophe occurred, without a painful re-awakening of perhaps the first images of horror that the scenes of real life stamped on my mind.

This good spinster had in her composition a strong vein of the superstitious, and was pleased, among other fancies, to read alone in her chamber by a taper fixed in a candlestick which she had had formed out of a human skull. One night this strange piece of furniture acquired suddenly the power of locomotion, and, after performing some odd circles on her chimney-piece, fairly leaped on the floor, and continued to roll about the apartment. Mrs. Swinton calmly proceeded to the adjoining room for another light, and had the satisfaction to penetrate the mystery on the spot. Rats abounded in the ancient building she inhabited, and one of these had managed to ensconce itself within her favourite *memento mori*. Though thus endowed with a more than feminine share of nerve, she entertained largely that belief in supernaturals which in those times was not considered as sitting ungracefully on the grave and aged of her condition; and the story of the Magic Mirror was one for which she vouched with particular confidence, alleging indeed that one

of her own family had been an eyewitness of the incidents recorded in it.

I tell the tale as it was told to me.

Stories enow of much the same cast will present themselves to the recollection of such of my readers as have ever dabbled in a species of lore to which I certainly gave more hours, at one period of my life, than I should gain any credit by confessing.

August 1831.

MY

AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR.

There are times
When Fancy plays her gambols, in despite
Even of our watchful senses, when in sooth
Substance seems shadow, shadow substance seems,
When the broad, palpable, and mark'd partition
'Twixt that which is and is not seems dissolved,
As if the mental eye gain'd power to gaze
Beyond the limits of the existing world.
Such hours of shadowy dreams I better love
Than all the gross realities of life.

ANONYMOUS.

MY AUNT MARGARET was one of that respected sisterhood upon whom devolve all the trouble and solicitude incidental to the possession of children, excepting only that which attends their entrance into the world. We were a large family, of very different dispositions and constitutions. Some were dull and peevish — they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be amused; some were rude, romping, and boisterous — they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be kept quiet, or rather that their noise might be removed out of hearing; those who were indisposed were sent with the prospect of being nursed; those who were stubborn, with the hope of their being subdued by the kindness of Aunt Margaret's discipline: in short, she had all the various duties of a mother, without the credit and dignity of the

maternal character. The busy scene of her various cares is now over — of the invalids and the robust, the kind and the rough, the peevish and pleased children who thronged her little parlour from morning to night, not one now remains alive but myself; who, afflicted by early infirmity, was one of the most delicate of her nurslings, yet, nevertheless, have outlived them all.

It is still my custom, and shall be so while I have the use of my limbs, to visit my respected relation at least three times a week. Her abode is about half a mile from the suburbs of the town in which I reside, and is accessible not only by the high-road, from which it stands at some distance, but by means of a greensward footpath leading through some pretty meadows. I have so little left to torment me in life, that it is one of my greatest vexations to know that several of these sequestered fields have been devoted as sites for building. In that which is nearest the town, wheelbarrows have been at work for several weeks in such numbers that, I verily believe, its whole surface, to the depth of at least eighteen inches, was mounted in these monotrochs at the same moment, and in the act of being transported from one place to another. Huge triangular piles of planks are also reared in different parts of the devoted messuage; and a little group of trees, that still grace the eastern end, which rises in a gentle ascent, have just received warning to quit, expressed by a daub of white paint, and are to give place to a curious grove of chimneys.

It would, perhaps, hurt others in my situation to reflect that this little range of pasturage once belonged to my father (whose family was of some

consideration in the world), and was sold by patches to remedy distresses in which he involved himself in an attempt by commercial adventure to redeem his diminished fortune. While the building scheme was in full operation, this circumstance was often pointed out to me by the class of friends who are anxious that no part of your misfortunes should escape your observation. "Such pasture-ground! lying at the very town's end. In turnips and potatoes the parks would bring £20 per acre, and if leased for building — oh, it was a gold mine! And all sold for an old song out of the ancient possessor's hands!" My comforters cannot bring me to repine much on this subject. If I could be allowed to look back on the past without interruption, I could willingly give up the enjoyment of present income, and the hope of future profit, to those who have purchased what my father sold. I regret the alteration of the ground only because it destroys associations, and I would more willingly (I think) see the Earl's Closes in the hands of strangers, retaining their silvan appearance, than know them for my own, if torn up by agriculture or covered with buildings. Mine are the sensations of poor Logan: —

> The horrid plough has razed the green
> Where yet a child I stray'd;
> The axe has fell'd the hawthorn screen,
> The schoolboy's summer shade.

I hope, however, the threatened devastation will not be consummated in my day. Although the adventurous spirit of times short while since passed gave rise to the undertaking, I have been encouraged to think that the subsequent changes have so far damped the spirit of speculation that

the rest of the woodland footpath leading to Aunt Margaret's retreat will be left undisturbed for her time and mine. I am interested in this, for every step of the way, after I have passed through the green already mentioned, has for me something of early remembrance. There is the stile at which I can recollect a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity, as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps, which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the suppressed bitterness of the moment, and, conscious of my own inferiority, the feeling of envy with which I regarded the easy movements and elastic steps of my more happily formed brethren. Alas! these goodly barks have all perished on life's wide ocean, and only that which seemed so little seaworthy, as the naval phrase goes, has reached the port when the tempest is over. Then there is the pool, where, manœuvring our little navy, constructed out of the broad water-flags, my elder brother fell in, and was scarce saved from the watery element to die under Nelson's banner. There is the hazel copse, also, in which my brother Henry used to gather nuts, thinking little that he was to die in an Indian jungle in quest of rupees.

There is so much more of remembrance about the little walk, that — as I stop, rest on my crutch-headed cane, and look round with that species of comparison between the thing I was and that which I now am — it almost induces me to doubt my own identity; until I find myself in face of the honeysuckle porch of Aunt Margaret's dwelling, with its irregularity of front, and its odd projecting latticed windows; where the work-

men seem to have made a study that no one of them should resemble another, in form, size, or in the old-fashioned stone entablature and labels which adorn them. This tenement, once the manor-house of Earl's Closes, we still retain a slight hold upon; for in some family arrangements it had been settled upon Aunt Margaret during the term of her life. Upon this frail tenure depends, in a great measure, the last shadow of the family of Bothwell of Earl's Closes, and their last slight connection with their paternal inheritance. The only representative will then be an infirm old man, moving not unwillingly to the grave, which has devoured all that were dear to his affections.

When I have indulged such thoughts for a minute or two, I enter the mansion, which is said to have been the gatehouse only of the original building, and find one being on whom time seems to have made little impression; for the Aunt Margaret of to-day bears the same proportional age to the Aunt Margaret of my early youth that the boy of ten years old does to the man of (by'r Lady!) some fifty-six years. The old lady's invariable costume has doubtless some share in confirming one in the opinion that time has stood still with Aunt Margaret.

The brown or chocolate-coloured silk gown, with ruffles of the same stuff at the elbow, within which are others of Mechlin lace — the black silk gloves, or mitts, the white hair combed back upon a roll, and the cap of spotless cambric, which closes around the venerable countenance, as they were not the costume of 1780, so neither were they that of 1826; they are altogether a style peculiar to the individual Aunt Margaret. There she still sits,

as she sat thirty years since, with her wheel or the stocking, which she works by the fire in winter, and by the window in summer; or, perhaps, venturing as far as the porch in an unusually fine summer evening. Her frame, like some well-constructed piece of mechanics, still performs the operations for which it had seemed destined; going its round with an activity which is gradually diminished, yet indicating no probability that it will soon come to a period.

The solicitude and affection which had made Aunt Margaret the willing slave to the inflictions of a whole nursery have now for their object the health and comfort of one old and infirm man; the last remaining relative of her family, and the only one who can still find interest in the traditional stores which she hoards; as some miser hides the gold which he desires that no one should enjoy after his death.

My conversation with Aunt Margaret generally relates little either to the present or to the future: for the passing day we possess as much as we require, and we neither of us wish for more; and for that which is to follow we have on this side of the grave neither hopes, nor fears, nor anxiety. We therefore naturally look back to the past, and forget the present fallen fortunes and declined importance of our family in recalling the hours when it was wealthy and prosperous.

With this slight introduction the reader will know as much of Aunt Margaret and her nephew as is necessary to comprehend the following conversation and narrative.

Last week, when, late in a summer evening, I went to call on the old lady to whom my reader is

now introduced, I was received by her with all her usual affection and benignity; while, at the same time, she seemed abstracted and disposed to silence. I asked her the reason. "They have been clearing out the old chapel," she said; "John Clayhudgeons having, it seems, discovered that the stuff within — being, I suppose, the remains of our ancestors — was excellent for top-dressing the meadows."

Here I started up with more alacrity than I have displayed for some years; but sat down while my aunt added, laying her hand upon my sleeve, "The chapel has been long considered as common ground, my dear, and used for a penfold, and what objection can we have to the man for employing what is his own, to his own profit? Besides, I did speak to him, and he very readily and civilly promised that, if he found bones or monuments, they should be carefully respected and reinstated; and what more could I ask? So, the first stone they found bore the name of Margaret Bothwell, 1585, and I have caused it to be laid carefully aside, as I think it betokens death; and having served my namesake two hundred years, it has just been cast up in time to do me the same good turn. My house has been long put in order, as far as the small earthly concerns require it, but who shall say that their account with Heaven is sufficiently revised!"

"After what you have said, aunt," I replied, "perhaps I ought to take my hat and go away, and so I should, but that there is on this occasion a little alloy mingled with your devotion. To think of death at all times is a duty — to suppose it nearer, from the finding an old gravestone, is

superstition; and you, with your strong useful common-sense, which was so long the prop of a fallen family, are the last person whom I should have suspected of such weakness."

"Neither would I deserve your suspicions, kinsman," answered Aunt Margaret, "if we were speaking of any incident occurring in the actual business of human life. But, for all this, I have a sense of superstition about me which I do not wish to part with. It is a feeling which separates me from this age, and links me with that to which I am hastening; and even when it seems, as now, to lead me to the brink of the grave, and bids me gaze on it, I do not love that it should be dispelled. It soothes my imagination, without influencing my reason or conduct."

"I profess, my good lady," replied I, "that had any one but you made such a declaration, I should have thought it as capricious as that of the clergyman who, without vindicating his false reading, preferred, from habit's sake, his old Mumpsimus to the modern Sumpsimus."

"Well," answered my aunt, "I must explain my inconsistency in this particular by comparing it to another. I am, as you know, a piece of that old-fashioned thing called a Jacobite; but I am so in sentiment and feeling only, for a more loyal subject never joined in prayers for the health and wealth of George the Fourth, whom God long preserve! But I dare say that kind-hearted sovereign would not deem that an old woman did him much injury, if she leaned back in her arm-chair, just in such a twilight as this, and thought of the high-mettled men, whose sense of duty called them to arms against his grandfather; and how, in a cause

which they deemed that of their rightful prince and country,

> They fought till their hand to the broadsword was glued,
> They fought against fortune with hearts unsubdued.

Do not come at such a moment, when my head is full of plaids, pibrochs, and claymores, and ask my reason to admit what, I am afraid, it cannot deny — I mean, that the public advantage peremptorily demanded that these things should cease to exist. I cannot, indeed, refuse to allow the justice of your reasoning; but yet, being convinced against my will, you will gain little by your motion. You might as well read to an infatuated lover the catalogue of his mistress's imperfections; for, when he has been compelled to listen to the summary, you will only get for answer that 'he lo'es her a' the better.' "

I was not sorry to have changed the gloomy train of Aunt Margaret's thoughts, and replied in the same tone, " Well, I can't help being persuaded that our good King is the more sure of Mrs. Bothwell's loyal affection that he has the Stuart right of birth, as well as the Act of Succession, in his favour."

" Perhaps my attachment, were its source of consequence, might be found warmer for the union of the rights you mention," said Aunt Margaret; " but, upon my word, it would be as sincere if the King's right were founded only on the will of the nation, as declared at the Revolution. I am none of your *jure divino* folk."

" And a Jacobite notwithstanding?"

" And a Jacobite notwithstanding; or rather, I will give you leave to call me one of the party

which, in Queen Anne's time, were called *Whimsicals*, because they were sometimes operated upon by feelings, sometimes by principle. After all, it is very hard that you will not allow an old woman to be as inconsistent in her political sentiments as mankind in general show themselves in all the various courses of life; since you cannot point out one of them in which the passions and prejudices of those who pursue it are not perpetually carrying us away from the path which our reason points out."

"True, aunt; but you are a wilful wanderer, who should be forced back into the right path."

"Spare me, I entreat you," replied Aunt Margaret. "You remember the Gaelic song, though I dare say I mispronounce the words —

Hatil mohatil, na dowski mi.
(I am asleep, do not waken me.)

I tell you, kinsman, that the sort of waking dreams which my imagination spins out, in what your favourite Wordsworth calls 'moods of my own mind,' are worth all the rest of my more active days. Then, instead of looking forwards, as I did in youth, and forming for myself fairy palaces upon the verge of the grave, I turn my eyes backward upon the days and manners of my better time; and the sad yet soothing recollections come so close and interesting that I almost think it sacrilege to be wiser, or more rational, or less prejudiced than those to whom I looked up in my younger years."

"I think I now understand what you mean," I answered, "and can comprehend why you should occasionally prefer the twilight of illusion to the steady light of reason."

"Where there is no task," she rejoined, "to be performed, we may sit in the dark if we like it — if we go to work, we must ring for candles."

"And amidst such shadowy and doubtful light," continued I, "imagination frames her enchanted and enchanting visions, and sometimes passes them upon the senses for reality."

"Yes," said Aunt Margaret, who is a well-read woman, "to those who resemble the translator of Tasso —

> Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
> Believed the magic wonders which he sung.

It is not required for this purpose that you should be sensible of the painful horrors which an actual belief in such prodigies inflicts: such a belief, nowadays, belongs only to fools and children. It is not necessary that your ears should tingle and your complexion change, like that of Theodore, at the approach of the spectral huntsman. All that is indispensable for the enjoyment of the milder feeling of supernatural awe is that you should be susceptible of the slight shuddering which creeps over you when you hear a tale of terror — that well-vouched tale which the narrator, having first expressed his general disbelief of all such legendary lore, selects and produces, as having something in it which he has always been obliged to give up as inexplicable. Another symptom is, a momentary hesitation to look round you, when the interest of the narrative is at the highest; and the third, a desire to avoid looking into a mirror, when you are alone, in your chamber, for the evening. I mean such are signs which indicate the crisis, when a female imagination is in due temperature to enjoy a ghost story. I do not pretend to

describe those which express the same disposition in a gentleman."

"That last symptom, dear aunt, of shunning the mirror seems likely to be a rare occurrence amongst the fair sex."

"You are a novice in toilet fashions, my dear cousin. All women consult the looking-glass with anxiety before they go into company; but when they return home, the mirror has not the same charm. The die has been cast: the party has been successful or unsuccessful in the impression which she desired to make. But, without going deeper into the mysteries of the dressing-table, I will tell you that I myself, like many other honest folks, do not like to see the blank black front of a large mirror in a room dimly lighted, and where the reflection of the candle seems rather to lose itself in the deep obscurity of the glass than to be reflected back again into the apartment. That space of inky darkness seems to be a field for Fancy to play her revels in. She may call up other features to meet us, instead of the reflection of our own; or, as in the spells of Hallowe'en, which we learned in childhood, some unknown form may be seen peeping over our shoulder. In short, when I am in a ghost-seeing humour, I make my handmaiden draw the green curtains over the mirror before I go into the room, so that she may have the first shock of the apparition, if there be any to be seen. But, to tell you the truth, this dislike to look into a mirror in particular times and places has, I believe, its original foundation in a story which came to me by tradition from my grandmother, who was a party concerned in the scene of which I will now tell you."

THE MIRROR.

CHAPTER I.

You are fond (said my aunt) of sketches of the society which has passed away. I wish I could describe to you Sir Philip Forester, the "chartered libertine" of Scottish good company, about the end of the last century. I never saw him, indeed; but my mother's traditions were full of his wit, gallantry, and dissipation. This gay knight flourished about the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. He was the Sir Charles Easy and the Lovelace of his day and country: renowned for the number of duels he had fought, and the successful intrigues which he had carried on. The supremacy which he had attained in the fashionable world was absolute; and when we combine it with one or two anecdotes, for which, "if laws were made for every degree," he ought certainly to have been hanged, the popularity of such a person really serves to show, either that the present times are much more decent, if not more virtuous, than they formerly were, or that high breeding then was of more difficult attainment than that which is now so called, and consequently entitled the successful professor to a proportional degree of plenary indulgences and

privileges. No beau of this day could have borne out so ugly a story as that of Pretty Peggy Grindstone, the miller's daughter at Sillermills — it had well-nigh made work for the Lord Advocate. But it hurt Sir Philip Forester no more than the hail hurts the hearthstone. He was as well received in society as ever, and dined with the Duke of A—— the day the poor girl was buried. She died of heartbreak. But that has nothing to do with my story.

Now, you must listen to a single word upon kith, kin, and ally. I promise you I will not be prolix. But it is necessary to the authenticity of my legend that you should know that Sir Philip Forester, with his handsome person, elegant accomplishments, and fashionable manners, married the younger Miss Falconer of King's-Copland. The elder sister of this lady had previously become the wife of my grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Bothwell, and brought into our family a good fortune. Miss Jemima, or Miss Jemmie Falconer, as she was usually called, had also about ten housand pounds sterling, then thought a very handsome portion indeed.

The two sisters were extremely different, though each had their admirers while they remained single. Lady Bothwell had some touch of the old King's-Copland blood about her. She was bold, though not to the degree of audacity, ambitious and desirous to raise her house and family, and was, as has been said, a considerable spur to my grandfather, who was otherwise an indolent man; but whom, unless he has been slandered, his lady's influence involved in some political matters which had been more wisely let alone. She was a woman

of high principle, however, and masculine good sense, as some of her letters testify, which are still in my wainscot cabinet.

Jemmie Falconer was the reverse of her sister in every respect. Her understanding did not reach above the ordinary pitch, if, indeed, she could be said to have attained it. Her beauty, while it lasted, consisted in a great measure of delicacy of complexion and regularity of features, without any peculiar force of expression. Even these charms faded under the sufferings attendant on an ill-sorted match. She was passionately attached to her husband, by whom she was treated with a callous yet polite indifference; which, to one whose heart was as tender as her judgment was weak, was more painful perhaps than absolute ill-usage. Sir Philip was a voluptuary — that is, a completely selfish egotist: whose disposition and character resembled the rapier he wore, polished, keen, and brilliant, but inflexible and unpitying. As he observed carefully all the usual forms towards his lady, he had the art to deprive her even of the compassion of the world; and, useless and unavailing as that may be while actually possessed by the sufferer, it is, to a mind like Lady Forester's, most painful to know she has it not.

The tattle of society did its best to place the peccant husband above the suffering wife. Some called her a poor spiritless thing, and declared that, with a little of her sister's spirit, she might have brought to reason any Sir Philip whatsoever, were it the termagant Falconbridge himself. But the greater part of their acquaintance affected candour, and saw faults on both sides, though, in fact, there only existed the oppressor and the

oppressed. The tone of such critics was — "To be sure, no one will justify Sir Philip Forester, but then we all know Sir Philip, and Jemmie Falconer might have known what she had to expect from the beginning. What made her set her cap at Sir Philip? He would never have looked at her if she had not thrown herself at his head, with her poor ten thousand pounds. I am sure, if it is money he wanted, she spoiled his market. I know where Sir Philip could have done much better. And then, if she *would* have the man, could not she try to make him more comfortable at home, and have his friends oftener, and not plague him with the squalling children, and take care all was handsome and in good style about the house? I declare I think Sir Philip would have made a very domestic man, with a woman who knew how to manage him."

Now these fair critics, in raising their profound edifice of domestic felicity, did not recollect that the corner-stone was wanting, and that, to receive good company with good cheer, the means of the banquet ought to have been furnished by Sir Philip, whose income (dilapidated as it was) was not equal to the display of the hospitality required, and, at the same time, to the supply of the good knight's *menus plaisirs*. So, in spite of all that was so sagely suggested by female friends, Sir Philip carried his good-humour everywhere abroad, and left at home a solitary mansion and a pining spouse.

At length, inconvenienced in his money affairs, and tired even of the short time which he spent in his own dull house, Sir Philip Forester determined to take a trip to the Continent, in the capacity

of a volunteer. It was then common for men of fashion to do so; and our knight perhaps was of opinion that a touch of the military character, just enough to exalt but not render pedantic his qualities as a *beau garçon*, was necessary to maintain possession of the elevated situation which he held in the ranks of fashion.

Sir Philip's resolution threw his wife into agonies of terror, by which the worthy baronet was so much annoyed that, contrary to his wont, he took some trouble to soothe her apprehensions, and once more brought her to shed tears, in which sorrow was not altogether unmingled with pleasure. Lady Bothwell asked, as a favour, Sir Philip's permission to receive her sister and her family into her own house during his absence on the Continent. Sir Philip readily assented to a proposition which saved expense, silenced the foolish people who might have talked of a deserted wife and family, and gratified Lady Bothwell; for whom he felt some respect, as for one who often spoke to him, always with freedom, and sometimes with severity, without being deterred either by his raillery or the *prestige* of his reputation.

A day or two before Sir Philip's departure, Lady Bothwell took the liberty of asking him, in her sister's presence, the direct question which his timid wife had often desired, but never ventured, to put to him.

"Pray, Sir Philip, what route do you take when you reach the Continent?"

"I go from Leith to Helvoet by a packet with advices."

"That I comprehend perfectly," said Lady Bothwell drily; "but you do not mean to remain long

at Helvoet, I presume, and I should like to know what is your next object?"

"You ask me, my dear lady," answered Sir Philip, "a question which I have not dared to ask myself. The answer depends on the fate of war. I shall, of course, go to headquarters, wherever they may happen to be for the time, deliver my letters of introduction, learn as much of the noble art of war as may suffice a poor interloping amateur, and then take a glance at the sort of thing of which we read so much in the Gazette."

"And I trust, Sir Philip," said Lady Bothwell, "that you will remember that you are a husband and a father, and that, though you think fit to indulge this military fancy, you will not let it hurry you into dangers which it is certainly unnecessary for any save professional persons to encounter?"

"Lady Bothwell does me too much honour," replied the adventurous knight, "in regarding such a circumstance with the slightest interest. But, to soothe your flattering anxiety, I trust your ladyship will recollect that I cannot expose to hazard the venerable and paternal character which you so obligingly recommend to my protection, without putting in some peril an honest fellow, called Philip Forester, with whom I have kept company for thirty years, and with whom, though some folks consider him a coxcomb, I have not the least desire to part."

"Well, Sir Philip, you are the best judge of your own affairs. I have little right to interfere —you are not my husband."

"God forbid!" said Sir Philip hastily; instantly adding, however, "God forbid that I should de-

prive my friend Sir Geoffrey of so inestimable a treasure."

"But you are my sister's husband," replied the lady; "and I suppose you are aware of her present distress of mind" ——

"If hearing of nothing else from morning to night can make me aware of it," said Sir Philip, "I should know something of the matter."

"I do not pretend to reply to your wit, Sir Philip," answered Lady Bothwell; "but you must be sensible that all this distress is on account of apprehensions for your personal safety."

"In that case, I am surprised that Lady Bothwell, at least, should give herself so much trouble upon so insignificant a subject."

"My sister's interest may account for my being anxious to learn something of Sir Philip Forester's motions, about which otherwise, I know, he would not wish me to concern myself. I have a brother's safety, too, to be anxious for."

"You mean Major Falconer, your brother by the mother's side? What can he possibly have to do with our present agreeable conversation?"

"You have had words together, Sir Philip," said Lady Bothwell.

"Naturally; we are connections," replied Sir Philip, "and as such have always had the usual intercourse."

"That is an evasion of the subject," answered the lady. "By words I mean angry words, on the subject of your usage of your wife."

"If," replied Sir Philip Forester, "you suppose Major Falconer simple enough to intrude his advice upon me, Lady Bothwell, in my domestic matters, you are indeed warranted in believing

that I might possibly be so far displeased with the interference as to request him to reserve his advice till it was asked."

"And, being on these terms, you are going to join the very army in which my brother Falconer is now serving?"

"No man knows the path of honour better than Major Falconer," said Sir Philip. "An aspirant after fame, like me, cannot choose a better guide than his footsteps."

Lady Bothwell rose and went to the window, the tears gushing from her eyes.

"And this heartless raillery," she said, "is all the consideration that is to be given to our apprehensions of a quarrel which may bring on the most terrible consequences? Good God! of what can men's hearts be made, who can thus dally with the agony of others?"

Sir Philip Forester was moved; he laid aside the mocking tone in which he had hitherto spoken.

"Dear Lady Bothwell," he said, taking her reluctant hand, "we are both wrong. You are too deeply serious; I, perhaps, too little so. The dispute I had with Major Falconer was of no earthly consequence. Had anything occurred betwixt us that ought to have been settled *par voie du fait*, as we say in France, neither of us are persons that are likely to postpone such a meeting. Permit me to say that, were it generally known that you or my Lady Forester are apprehensive of such a catastrophe, it might be the very means of bringing about what would not otherwise be likely to happen. I know your good sense, Lady Bothwell, and that you will understand me when I say that really my affairs require my absence for some

months. This Jemima cannot understand: it is a perpetual recurrence of questions, why can you not do this, or that, or the third thing; and, when you have proved to her that her expedients are totally ineffectual, you have just to begin the whole round again. Now, do you tell her, dear Lady Bothwell, that *you* are satisfied. She is, you must confess, one of those persons with whom authority goes further than reasoning. Do but repose a little confidence in me, and you shall see how amply I will repay it."

Lady Bothwell shook her head, as one but half satisfied. "How difficult it is to extend confidence, when the basis on which it ought to rest has been so much shaken! But I will do my best to make Jemima easy; and further, I can only say, that for keeping your present purpose I hold you responsible both to God and man."

"Do not fear that I will deceive you," said Sir Philip. "The safest conveyance to me will be through the general post-office, Helvoetsluys, where I will take care to leave orders for forwarding my letters. As for Falconer, our only encounter will be over a bottle of Burgundy, so make yourself perfectly easy on his score."

Lady Bothwell could *not* make herself easy; yet she was sensible that her sister hurt her own cause by *taking on*, as the maid-servants call it, too vehemently; and by showing before every stranger, by manner, and sometimes by words also, a dissatisfaction with her husband's journey that was sure to come to his ears, and equally certain to displease him. But there was no help for this domestic dissension, which ended only with the day of separation.

I am sorry I cannot tell, with precision, the year in which Sir Philip Forester went over to Flanders; but it was one of those in which the campaign opened with extraordinary fury; and many bloody, though indecisive, skirmishes were fought between the French on the one side and the Allies on the other. In all our modern improvements, there are none, perhaps, greater than in the accuracy and speed with which intelligence is transmitted from any scene of action to those in this country whom it may concern. During Marlborough's campaigns the sufferings of the many who had relations in or along with the army were greatly augmented by the suspense in which they were detained for weeks, after they had heard of bloody battles, in which, in all probability, those for whom their bosoms throbbed with anxiety had been personally engaged. Amongst those who were most agonised by this state of uncertainty was the — I had almost said deserted — wife of the gay Sir Philip Forester. A single letter had informed her of his arrival on the Continent: no others were received. One notice occurred in the newspapers, in which Volunteer Sir Philip Forester was mentioned as having been intrusted with a dangerous reconnaissance, which he had executed with the greatest courage, dexterity, and intelligence, and received the thanks of the commanding officer. The sense of his having acquired distinction brought a momentary glow into the lady's pale cheek; but it was instantly lost in ashen whiteness at the recollection of his danger. After this they had no news whatever, neither from Sir Philip nor even from their brother Falconer. The case of Lady Forester was not indeed different

from that of hundreds in the same situation; but a feeble mind is necessarily an irritable one, and the suspense which some bear with constitutional indifference or philosophical resignation, and some with a disposition to believe and hope the best, was intolerable to Lady Forester, at once solitary and sensitive, low-spirited, and devoid of strength of mind, whether natural or acquired.

CHAPTER II.

As she received no further news of Sir Philip, whether directly or indirectly, his unfortunate lady began now to feel a sort of consolation even in those careless habits which had so often given her pain. "He is so thoughtless," she repeated a hundred times a day to her sister, "he never writes when things are going on smoothly — it is his way: had anything happened he would have informed us."

Lady Bothwell listened to her sister without attempting to console her. Probably she might be of opinion that even the worst intelligence which could be received from Flanders might not be without some touch of consolation, and that the Dowager Lady Forester, if so she was doomed to be called, might have a source of happiness unknown to the wife of the gayest and finest gentleman in Scotland. This conviction became stronger as they learned from inquiries made at headquarters that Sir Philip was no longer with the army; though whether he had been taken or slain in some of those skirmishes which were perpetually occurring, and in which he loved to distinguish himself, or whether he had, for some unknown reason or capricious change of mind, voluntarily left the service, none of his countrymen in the camp of the Allies could form even a conjecture. Meantime his creditors at home became clamorous, entered

into possession of his property, and threatened his person, should he be rash enough to return to Scotland. These additional disadvantages aggravated Lady Bothwell's displeasure against the fugitive husband; while her sister saw nothing in any of them, save what tended to increase her grief for the absence of him whom her imagination now represented — as it had before marriage — gallant, gay, and affectionate.

About this period there appeared in Edinburgh a man of singular appearance and pretensions. He was commonly called the Paduan Doctor, from having received his education at that famous university. He was supposed to possess some rare receipts in medicine, with which, it was affirmed, he had wrought remarkable cures. But though, on the one hand, the physicians of Edinburgh termed him an empiric, there were many persons, and among them some of the clergy, who, while they admitted the truth of the cures and the force of his remedies, alleged that Doctor Baptista Damiotti made use of charms and unlawful arts in order to obtain success in his practice. The resorting to him was even solemnly preached against, as a seeking of health from idols, and a trusting to the help which was to come from Egypt. But the protection which the Paduan Doctor received from some friends of interest and consequence enabled him to set these imputations at defiance, and to assume, even in the city of Edinburgh, famed as it was for abhorrence of witches and necromancers, the dangerous character of an expounder of futurity. It was at length rumoured that, for a certain gratification, which of course was not an inconsiderable one, Doctor Baptista Damiotti could tell the fate

of the absent, and even show his visitors the personal form of their absent friends, and the action in which they were engaged at the moment. This rumour came to the ears of Lady Forester, who had reached that pitch of mental agony in which the sufferer will do anything, or endure anything, that suspense may be converted into certainty.

Gentle and timid in most cases, her state of mind made her equally obstinate and reckless, and it was with no small surprise and alarm that her sister, Lady Bothwell, heard her express a resolution to visit this man of art, and learn from him the fate of her husband. Lady Bothwell remonstrated on the improbability that such pretensions as those of this foreigner could be founded in anything but imposture.

"I care not," said the deserted wife, "what degree of ridicule I may incur. If there be any one chance out of a hundred that I may obtain some certainty of my husband's fate, I would not miss that chance for whatever else the world can offer me."

Lady Bothwell next urged the unlawfulness of resorting to such sources of forbidden knowledge.

"Sister," replied the sufferer, "he who is dying of thirst cannot refrain from drinking even poisoned water. She who suffers under suspense must seek information, even were the powers which offer it unhallowed and infernal. I go to learn my fate alone; and this very evening will I know it. The sun that rises to-morrow shall find me, if not more happy, at least more resigned."

"Sister," said Lady Bothwell, "if you are determined upon this wild step, you shall not go alone. If this man be an impostor, you may be too much

agitated by your feelings to detect his villany. If, which I cannot believe, there be any truth in what he pretends, you shall not be exposed alone to a communication of so extraordinary a nature. I will go with you, if indeed you determine to go. But yet reconsider your project, and renounce inquiries which cannot be prosecuted without guilt, and perhaps without danger."

Lady Forester threw herself into her sister's arms, and, clasping her to her bosom, thanked her a hundred times for the offer of her company; while she declined with a melancholy gesture the friendly advice with which it was accompanied.

When the hour of twilight arrived, which was the period when the Paduan Doctor was understood to receive the visits of those who came to consult with him, the two ladies left their apartments in the Canongate of Edinburgh, having their dress arranged like that of women of an inferior description, and their plaids disposed around their faces as they were worn by the same class; for, in those days of aristocracy, the quality of the wearer was generally indicated by the manner in which her plaid was disposed, as well as by the fineness of its texture. It was Lady Bothwell who had suggested this species of disguise, partly to avoid observation as they should go to the conjurer's house, and partly in order to make trial of his penetration, by appearing before him in a feigned character. Lady Forester's servant, of tried fidelity, had been employed by her to propitiate the doctor by a suitable fee, and a story intimating that a soldier's wife desired to know the fate of her husband — a subject upon which, in all probability, the sage was very frequently consulted.

To the last moment, when the Palace clock struck eight, Lady Bothwell earnestly watched her sister, in hopes that she might retreat from her rash undertaking; but as mildness, and even timidity, is capable at times of vehement and fixed purposes, she found Lady Forester resolutely unmoved and determined when the moment of departure arrived. Ill satisfied with the expedition, but determined not to leave her sister at such a crisis, Lady Bothwell accompanied Lady Forester through more than one obscure street and lane, the servant walking before and acting as their guide. At length he suddenly turned into a narrow court, and knocked at an arched door, which seemed to belong to a building of some antiquity. It opened, though no one appeared to act as porter; and the servant, stepping aside from the entrance, motioned the ladies to enter. They had no sooner done so than it shut, and excluded their guide. The two ladies found themselves in a small vestibule, illuminated by a dim lamp, and having, when the door was closed, no communication with the external light or air. The door of an inner apartment, partly open, was at the farther side of the vestibule.

"We must not hesitate now, Jemima," said Lady Bothwell, and walked forwards into the inner room, where, surrounded by books, maps, philosophical utensils, and other implements of peculiar shape and appearance, they found the man of art.

There was nothing very peculiar in the Italian's appearance. He had the dark complexion and marked features of his country, seemed about fifty years old, and was handsomely but plainly dressed in a full suit of black clothes, which was then

the universal costume of the medical profession. Large wax-lights, in silver sconces, illuminated the apartment, which was reasonably furnished. He rose as the ladies entered, and, notwithstanding the inferiority of their dress, received them with the marked respect due to their quality, and which foreigners are usually punctilious in rendering to those to whom such honours are due.

Lady Bothwell endeavoured to maintain her proposed incognito, and as the doctor ushered them to the upper end of the room made a motion declining his courtesy as unfitted for their condition. "We are poor people, sir," she said; "only my sister's distress has brought us to consult your worship whether" ——

He smiled as he interrupted her — "I am aware, madam, of your sister's distress, and its cause; I am aware, also, that I am honoured with a visit from two ladies of the highest consideration — Lady Bothwell and Lady Forester. If I could not distinguish them from the class of society which their present dress would indicate, there would be small possibility of my being able to gratify them by giving the information which they come to seek."

"I can easily understand," said Lady Bothwell ——

"Pardon my boldness to interrupt you, milady," cried the Italian. "Your ladyship was about to say that you could easily understand that I had got possession of your names by means of your domestic. But in thinking so you do injustice to the fidelity of your servant, and, I may add, to the skill of one who is also not less your humble servant — Baptista Damiotti."

"I have no intention to do either, sir," said Lady Bothwell, maintaining a tone of composure, though somewhat surprised, "but the situation is something new to me. If you know who we are, you also know, sir, what brought us here."

"Curiosity to know the fate of a Scottish gentleman of rank, now, or lately, upon the Continent," answered the seer. "His name is Il Cavaliero Philippo Forester, a gentleman who has the honour to be husband to this lady, and, with your ladyship's permission for using plain language, the misfortune not to value as it deserves that inestimable advantage."

Lady Forester sighed deeply, and Lady Bothwell replied —

"Since you know our object without our telling it, the only question that remains is, whether you have the power to relieve my sister's anxiety?"

"I have, madam," answered the Paduan scholar; "but there is still a previous inquiry. Have you the courage to behold with your own eyes what the Cavaliero Philippo Forester is now doing? Or will you take it on my report?"

"That question my sister must answer for herself," said Lady Bothwell.

"With my own eyes will I endure to see whatever you have power to show me," said Lady Forester, with the same determined spirit which had stimulated her since her resolution was taken upon this subject.

"There may be danger in it."

"If gold can compensate the risk," said Lady Forester, taking out her purse.

"I do not such things for the purpose of gain," answered the foreigner. "I dare not turn my art

to such a purpose. If I take the gold of the wealthy, it is but to bestow it on the poor; nor do I ever accept more than the sum I have already received from your servant. Put up your purse, madam: an adept needs not your gold."

Lady Bothwell, considering this rejection of her sister's offer as a mere trick of an empiric, to induce her to press a larger sum upon him, and willing that the scene should be commenced and ended, offered some gold in turn, observing that it was only to enlarge the sphere of his charity.

"Let Lady Bothwell enlarge the sphere of her own charity," said the Paduan, "not merely in giving of alms, in which I know she is not deficient, but in judging the character of others; and let her oblige Baptista Damiotti by believing him honest, till she shall discover him to be a knave. Do not be surprised, madam, if I speak in answer to your thoughts rather than your expressions, and tell me once more whether you have courage to look on what I am prepared to show?"

"I own, sir," said Lady Bothwell, "that your words strike me with some sense of fear; but whatever my sister desires to witness, I will not shrink from witnessing along with her."

"Nay, the danger only consists in the risk of your resolution failing you. The sight can only last for the space of seven minutes; and should you interrupt the vision by speaking a single word, not only would the charm be broken, but some danger might result to the spectators. But if you can remain steadily silent for the seven minutes, your curiosity will be gratified without the slightest risk; and for this I will engage my honour."

Internally Lady Bothwell thought the security was but an indifferent one; but she suppressed the suspicion, as if she had believed that the adept, whose dark features wore a half-formed smile, could in reality read even her most secret reflections. A solemn pause then ensued, until Lady Forester gathered courage enough to reply to the physician, as he termed himself, that she would abide with firmness and silence the sight which he had promised to exhibit to them. Upon this, he made them a low obeisance, and saying he went to prepare matters to meet their wish, left the apartment. The two sisters, hand in hand, as if seeking by that close union to divert any danger which might threaten them, sat down on two seats in immediate contact with each other; Jemima seeking support in the manly and habitual courage of Lady Bothwell, and she, on the other hand, more agitated than she had expected, endeavouring to fortify herself by the desperate resolution which circumstances had forced her sister to assume. The one perhaps said to herself that her sister never feared anything; and the other might reflect that what so feeble a minded woman as Jemima did not fear could not properly be a subject of apprehension to a person of firmness and resolution like her own.

In a few moments the thoughts of both were diverted from their own situation, by a strain of music so singularly sweet and solemn, that, while it seemed calculated to avert or dispel any feeling unconnected with its harmony, increased, at the same time, the solemn excitation which the preceding interview was calculated to produce. The music was that of some instrument with which

they were unacquainted; but circumstances afterwards led my ancestress to believe that it was that of the harmonica, which she heard at a much later period in life.

When these heaven-born sounds had ceased, a door opened in the upper end of the apartment, and they saw Damiotti, standing at the head of two or three steps, sign to them to advance. His dress was so different from that which he had worn a few minutes before that they could hardly recognise him; and the deadly paleness of his countenance, and a certain stern rigidity of muscles, like that of one whose mind is made up to some strange and daring action, had totally changed the somewhat sarcastic expression with which he had previously regarded them both, and particularly Lady Bothwell. He was barefooted, excepting a species of sandals in the antique fashion; his legs were naked beneath the knees; above them he wore hose, and a doublet of dark crimson silk close to his body; and over that a flowing loose robe, something resembling a surplice, of snow-white linen: his throat and neck were uncovered, and his long, straight black hair was carefully combed down at full length.

As the ladies approached at his bidding, he showed no gesture of that ceremonious courtesy of which he had been formerly lavish. On the contrary, he made the signal of advance with an air of command; and when, arm in arm and with insecure steps, the sisters approached the spot where he stood, it was with a warning frown that he pressed his finger to his lips, as if reiterating his condition of absolute silence, while, stalking before them, he led the way into the next apartment.

This was a large room, hung with black, as if for a funeral. At the upper end was a table, or rather a species of altar, covered with the same lugubrious colour, on which lay divers objects resembling the usual implements of sorcery. These objects were not indeed visible as they advanced into the apartment; for the light which displayed them, being only that of two expiring lamps, was extremely faint. The master — to use the Italian phrase for persons of this description — approached the upper end of the room with a genuflexion like that of a Catholic to the crucifix, and at the same time crossed himself. The ladies followed in silence, and arm in arm. Two or three low broad steps led to a platform in front of the altar, or what resembled such. Here the sage took his stand, and placed the ladies beside him, once more earnestly repeating by signs his injunctions of silence. The Italian then, extending his bare arm from under his linen vestment, pointed with his forefinger to five large flambeaux, or torches, placed on each side of the altar. They took fire successively at the approach of his hand, or rather of his finger, and spread a strong light through the room. By this the visitors could discern that, on the seeming altar, were disposed two naked swords laid crosswise, a large open book, which they conceived to be a copy of the Holy Scriptures, but in a language to them unknown, and beside this mysterious volume was placed a human skull. But what struck the sisters most was a very tall and broad mirror, which occupied all the space behind the altar, and, illumined by the lighted torches, reflected the mysterious articles which were laid upon it.

The master then placed himself between the two

ladies, and, pointing to the mirror, took each by the hand, but without speaking a syllable. They gazed intently on the polished and sable space to which he had directed their attention. Suddenly the surface assumed a new and singular appearance. It no longer simply reflected the objects placed before it, but, as if it had self-contained scenery of its own, objects began to appear within it, at first in a disorderly, indistinct, and miscellaneous manner, like form arranging itself out of chaos; at length, in distinct and defined shape and symmetry. It was thus that, after some shifting of light and darkness over the face of the wonderful glass, a long perspective of arches and columns began to arrange itself on its sides, and a vaulted roof on the upper part of it; till, after many oscillations, the whole vision gained a fixed and stationary appearance, representing the interior of a foreign church. The pillars were stately, and hung with scutcheons; the arches were lofty and magnificent; the floor was lettered with funeral inscriptions. But there were no separate shrines, no images, no display of chalice or crucifix on the altar. It was, therefore, a Protestant church upon the Continent. A clergyman dressed in the Geneva gown and band stood by the communion-table, and, with the Bible opened before him, and his clerk awaiting in the background, seemed prepared to perform some service of the church to which he belonged.

At length there entered the middle aisle of the building a numerous party, which appeared to be a bridal one, as a lady and gentleman walked first, hand in hand, followed by a large concourse of persons of both sexes, gaily, nay richly, attired.

The bride, whose features they could distinctly see, seemed not more than sixteen years old, and extremely beautiful. The bridegroom, for some seconds, moved rather with his shoulder towards them, and his face averted; but his elegance of form and step struck the sisters at once with the same apprehension. As he turned his face suddenly, it was frightfully realised, and they saw, in the gay bridegroom before them, Sir Philip Forester. His wife uttered an imperfect exclamation, at the sound of which the whole scene stirred and seemed to separate.

"I could compare it to nothing," said Lady Bothwell, while recounting the wonderful tale, "but to the dispersion of the reflection offered by a deep and calm pool, when a stone is suddenly cast into it, and the shadows become dissipated and broken." The master pressed both the ladies' hands severely, as if to remind them of their promise, and of the danger which they incurred. The exclamation died away on Lady Forester's tongue without attaining perfect utterance, and the scene in the glass, after the fluctuation of a minute, again resumed to the eye its former appearance of a real scene existing within the mirror, as if represented in a picture, save that the figures were movable instead of being stationary.

The representation of Sir Philip Forester, now distinctly visible in form and feature, was seen to lead on towards the clergyman that beautiful girl, who advanced at once with diffidence and with a species of affectionate pride. In the meantime, and just as the clergyman had arranged the bridal company before him, and seemed about to commence the service, another group of persons, of

whom two or three were officers, entered the church. They moved, at first, forward, as though they came to witness the bridal ceremony, but suddenly one of the officers, whose back was towards the spectators, detached himself from his companions, and rushed hastily towards the marriage party, when the whole of them turned towards him, as if attracted by some exclamation which had accompanied his advance. Suddenly the intruder drew his sword; the bridegroom unsheathed his own, and made towards him; swords were also drawn by other individuals, both of the marriage party, and of those who had last entered. They fell into a sort of confusion, the clergyman and some elder and graver persons labouring apparently to keep the peace, while the hotter spirits on both sides brandished their weapons. But now the period of the brief space during which the soothsayer, as he pretended, was permitted to exhibit his art was arrived. The fumes again mixed together, and dissolved gradually from observation; the vaults and columns of the church rolled asunder and disappeared; and the front of the mirror reflected nothing save the blazing torches and the melancholy apparatus placed on the altar or table before it.

The doctor led the ladies, who greatly required his support, into the apartment whence they came, where wine, essences, and other means of restoring suspended animation had been provided during his absence. He motioned them to chairs, which they occupied in silence; Lady Forester, in particular, wringing her hands and casting her eyes up to heaven, but without speaking a word, as if the spell had been still before her eyes.

"And what we have seen is even now acting?" said Lady Bothwell, collecting herself with difficulty.

"That," answered Baptista Damiotti, "I cannot justly, or with certainty, say. But it is either now acting, or has been acted during a short space before this. It is the last remarkable transaction in which the Cavalier Forester has been engaged."

Lady Bothwell then expressed anxiety concerning her sister, whose altered countenance and apparent unconsciousness of what passed around her excited her apprehensions how it might be possible to convey her home.

"I have prepared for that," answered the adept. "I have directed the servant to bring your equipage as near to this place as the narrowness of the street will permit. Fear not for your sister; but give her, when you return home, this composing draught, and she will be better to-morrow morning. Few," he added in a melancholy tone, "leave this house as well in health as they entered it. Such being the consequence of seeking knowledge by mysterious means, I leave you to judge the condition of those who have the power of gratifying such irregular curiosity. Farewell, and forget not the potion."

"I will give her nothing that comes from you," said Lady Bothwell: "I have seen enough of your art already. Perhaps you would poison us both to conceal your own necromancy. But we are persons who want neither the means of making our wrongs known nor the assistance of friends to right them."

"You have had no wrongs from me, madam," said the adept. "You sought one who is little

grateful for such honour. He seeks no one, and only gives responses to those who invite and call upon him. After all, you have but learned a little sooner the evil which you must still be doomed to endure. I hear your servant's step at the door, and will detain your ladyship and Lady Forester no longer. The next packet from the Continent will explain what you have already partly witnessed. Let it not, if I may advise, pass too suddenly into your sister's hands."

So saying, he bid Lady Bothwell good-night. She went, lighted by the adept, to the vestibule, where he hastily threw a black cloak over his singular dress, and, opening the door, entrusted his visitors to the care of the servant. It was with difficulty that Lady Bothwell sustained her sister to the carriage, though it was only twenty steps distant. When they arrived at home, Lady Forester required medical assistance. The physician of the family attended, and shook his head on feeling her pulse.

"Here has been," he said, "a violent and sudden shock on the nerves. I must know how it has happened."

Lady Bothwell admitted they had visited the conjuror, and that Lady Forester had received some bad news respecting her husband, Sir Philip.

"That rascally quack would make my fortune were he to stay in Edinburgh," said the graduate. "This is the seventh nervous case I have heard of his making for me, and all by effect of terror." He next examined the composing draught which Lady Bothwell had unconsciously brought in her hand, tasted it, and pronounced it very germane to the matter, and what would save an application

to the apothecary. He then paused, and looking at Lady Bothwell very significantly, at length added, "I suppose I must not ask your ladyship anything about this Italian warlock's proceedings?"

"Indeed, Doctor," answered Lady Bothwell, "I consider what passed as confidential; and though the man may be a rogue, yet, as we were fools enough to consult him, we should, I think, be honest enough to keep his counsel."

"*May* be a knave! Come," said the doctor, "I am glad to hear your ladyship allows such a possibility in anything that comes from Italy."

"What comes from Italy may be as good as what comes from Hanover, Doctor. But you and I will remain good friends, and, that it may be so, we will say nothing of Whig and Tory."

"Not I," said the doctor, receiving his fee and taking his hat; "a Carolus serves my purpose as well as a Willielmus. But I should like to know why old Lady Saint Ringan's and all that set go about wasting their decayed lungs in puffing this foreign fellow."

"Ay! you had best set him down a Jesuit, as Scrub says." On these terms they parted.

The poor patient, whose nerves, from an extraordinary state of tension, had at length become relaxed in as extraordinary a degree, continued to struggle with a sort of imbecility, the growth of superstitious terror, when the shocking tidings were brought from Holland which fulfilled even her worst expectations.

They were sent by the celebrated Earl of Stair, and contained the melancholy event of a duel betwixt Sir Philip Forester and his wife's half-brother, Captain Falconer, of the Scotch-Dutch, as

they were then called, in which the latter had been killed. The cause of quarrel rendered the incident still more shocking. It seemed that Sir Philip had left the army suddenly, in consequence of being unable to pay a very considerable sum which he had lost to another volunteer at play. He had changed his name, and taken up his residence at Rotterdam, where he had insinuated himself into the good graces of an ancient and rich burgomaster, and, by his handsome person and graceful manners, captivated the affections of his only child, a very young person, of great beauty, and the heiress of much wealth. Delighted with the specious attractions of his proposed son-in-law, the wealthy merchant — whose idea of the British character was too high to admit of his taking any precaution to acquire evidence of his condition and circumstances — gave his consent to the marriage. It was about to be celebrated in the principal church of the city, when it was interrupted by a singular occurrence.

Captain Falconer having been detached to Rotterdam to bring up a part of the brigade of Scottish auxiliaries, who were in quarters there, a person of consideration in the town, to whom he had been formerly known, proposed to him for amusement to go to the high church, to see a countryman of his own married to the daughter of a wealthy burgomaster. Captain Falconer went accordingly, accompanied by his Dutch acquaintance, with a party of his friends, and two or three officers of the Scotch brigade. His astonishment may be conceived when he saw his own brother-in-law, a married man, on the point of leading to the altar the innocent and beautiful creature upon whom he

was about to practise a base and unmanly deceit. He proclaimed his villany on the spot, and the marriage was interrupted of course. But against the opinion of more thinking men, who considered Sir Philip Forester as having thrown himself out of the rank of men of honour, Captain Falconer admitted him to the privilege of such, accepted a challenge from him, and in the rencontre received a mortal wound. Such are the ways of Heaven, mysterious in our eyes. Lady Forester never recovered the shock of this dismal intelligence.

"And did this tragedy," said I, "take place exactly at the time when the scene in the mirror was exhibited?"

"It is hard to be obliged to maim one's story," answered my aunt; "but, to speak the truth, it happened some days sooner than the apparition was exhibited."

"And so there remained a possibility," said I, "that by some secret and speedy communication the artist might have received early intelligence of that incident."

"The incredulous pretended so," replied my aunt.

"What became of the adept?" demanded I.

"Why, a warrant came down shortly afterwards to arrest him for high-treason, as an agent of the Chevalier St. George; and Lady Bothwell, recollecting the hints which had escaped the doctor, an ardent friend of the Protestant succession, did then call to remembrance that this man was chiefly *proné* among the ancient matrons of her own political persuasion. It certainly seemed probable that intelligence from the Continent, which could

easily have been transmitted by an active and powerful agent, might have enabled him to prepare such a scene of phantasmagoria as she had herself witnessed. Yet there were so many difficulties in assigning a natural explanation, that, to the day of her death, she remained in great doubt on the subject, and much disposed to cut the Gordian knot by admitting the existence of supernatural agency."

"But, my dear aunt," said I, "what became of the man of skill?"

"Oh, he was too good a fortune-teller not to be able to foresee that his own destiny would be tragical if he waited the arrival of the man with the silver greyhound upon his sleeve. He made, as we say, a moonlight flitting, and was nowhere to be seen or heard of. Some noise there was about papers or letters found in the house, but it died away, and Doctor Baptista Damiotti was soon as little talked of as Galen or Hippocrates."

"And Sir Philip Forester," said I, "did he too vanish for ever from the public scene?"

"No," replied my kind informer. "He was heard of once more, and it was upon a remarkable occasion. It is said that we Scots, when there was such a nation in existence, have, among our full peck of virtues, one or two little barleycorns of vice. In particular, it is alleged that we rarely forgive, and never forget, any injuries received; that we used to make an idol of our resentment, as poor Lady Constance did of her grief; and are addicted, as Burns says, to 'nursing our wrath to keep it warm.' Lady Bothwell was not without this feeling; and, I believe, nothing whatever, scarce the restoration of the Stuart line, could have

happened so delicious to her feelings as an opportunity of being revenged on Sir Philip Forester for the deep and double injury which had deprived her of a sister and of a brother. But nothing of him was heard or known till many a year had passed away."

At length — it was on a Fastern's E'en (Shrovetide) assembly, at which the whole fashion of Edinburgh attended, full and frequent, and when Lady Bothwell had a seat amongst the lady patronesses, that one of the attendants on the company whispered into her ear that a gentleman wished to speak with her in private.

"In private? and in an assembly room? He must be mad. Tell him to call upon me to-morrow morning."

"I said so, my lady," answered the man, "but he desired me to give you this paper."

She undid the billet, which was curiously folded and sealed. It only bore the words, "*On business of life and death,*" written in a hand which she had never seen before. Suddenly it occurred to her that it might concern the safety of some of her political friends; she therefore followed the messenger to a small apartment where the refreshments were prepared, and from which the general company was excluded. She found an old man, who at her approach rose up and bowed profoundly. His appearance indicated a broken constitution, and his dress, though sedulously rendered conforming to the etiquette of a ball-room, was worn and tarnished, and hung in folds about his emaciated person. Lady Bothwell was about to feel for her purse, expecting to get rid of the suppliant at the expense of a little money, but some fear of a

mistake arrested her purpose. She therefore gave the man leisure to explain himself.

"I have the honour to speak with the Lady Bothwell?"

"I am Lady Bothwell. Allow me to say that this is no time or place for long explanations. What are your commands with me?"

"Your ladyship," said the old man, "had once a sister."

"True, whom I loved as my own soul."

"And a brother."

"The bravest, the kindest, the most affectionate!" said Lady Bothwell.

"Both these beloved relatives you lost by the fault of an unfortunate man," continued the stranger.

"By the crime of an unnatural, bloody-minded murderer," said the lady.

"I am answered," replied the old man, bowing, as if to withdraw.

"Stop, sir, I command you," said Lady Bothwell. "Who are you that, at such a place and time, come to recall these horrible recollections? I insist upon knowing."

"I am one who intends Lady Bothwell no injury, but, on the contrary, to offer her the means of doing a deed of Christian charity, which the world would wonder at, and which Heaven would reward; but I find her in no temper for such a sacrifice as I was prepared to ask."

"Speak out, sir! What is your meaning?" said Lady Bothwell.

"The wretch that has wronged you so deeply," rejoined the stranger, "is now on his death-bed. His days have been days of misery, his nights

have been sleepless hours of anguish, yet he cannot die without your forgiveness. His life has been an unremitting penance, yet he dares not part from his burden while your curses load his soul."

"Tell him," said Lady Bothwell sternly, "to ask pardon of that Being whom he has so greatly offended, not of an erring mortal like himself. What could my forgiveness avail him?"

"Much," answered the old man. "It will be an earnest of that which he may then venture to ask from his Creator, lady, and from yours. Remember, Lady Bothwell, you too have a death-bed to look forward to: your soul may, all human souls must, feel the awe of facing the judgment-seat, with the wounds of an untented conscience, raw and rankling. What thought would it be then that should whisper, 'I have given no mercy, how then shall I ask it?'"

"Man, whosoever thou mayst be," replied Lady Bothwell, "urge me not so cruelly. It would be but blasphemous hypocrisy to utter with my lips the words which every throb of my heart protests against. They would open the earth and give to light the wasted form of my sister, the bloody form of my murdered brother. Forgive him! Never, never!"

"Great God!" cried the old man, holding up his hands, "is it thus the worms which thou hast called out of dust obey the commands of their Maker? Farewell, proud and unforgiving woman. Exult that thou hast added to a death in want and pain the agonies of religious despair; but never again mock Heaven by petitioning for the pardon which thou hast refused to grant."

He was turning from her.

"Stop," she exclaimed; "I will try; yes, I will try to pardon him."

"Gracious lady," said the old man, "you will relieve the overburdened soul which dare not sever itself from its sinful companion of earth without being at peace with you. What do I know? your forgiveness may perhaps preserve for penitence the dregs of a wretched life."

"Ha!" said the lady, as a sudden light broke on her, "it is the villain himself!" And grasping Sir Philip Forester — for it was he, and no other — by the collar, she raised a cry of "Murder, murder! Seize the murderer!"

At an exclamation so singular, in such a place, the company thronged into the apartment, but Sir Philip Forester was no longer there. He had forcibly extricated himself from Lady Bothwell's hold, and had run out of the apartment which opened on the landing-place of the stair. There seemed no escape in that direction, for there were several persons coming up the steps, and others descending. But the unfortunate man was desperate. He threw himself over the balustrade, and alighted safely in the lobby, though a leap of fifteen feet at least, then dashed into the street, and was lost in darkness. Some of the Bothwell family made pursuit, and had they come up with the fugitive they might have perhaps slain him; for in those days men's blood ran warm in their veins. But the police did not interfere, the matter most criminal having happened long since, and in a foreign land. Indeed it was always thought that this extraordinary scene originated in a hypocritical experiment, by which Sir Philip desired to ascertain whether he might return to his native

country in safety from the resentment of a family which he had injured so deeply. As the result fell out so contrary to his wishes, he is believed to have returned to the Continent, and there died in exile. So closed the tale of the MYSTERIOUS MIRROR.

THE TAPESTRIED CHAMBER.

INTRODUCTION.

This is another little story from "The Keepsake" of 1828. It was told to me many years ago, by the late Miss Anna Seward, who, among other accomplishments that rendered her an amusing inmate in a country house, had that of recounting narratives of this sort with very considerable effect; much greater, indeed, than any one would be apt to guess from the style of her written performances. There are hours and moods when most people are not displeased to listen to such things; and I have heard some of the greatest and wisest of my contemporaries take their share in telling them.

August 1831.

THE TAPESTRIED CHAMBER;

OR,

THE LADY IN THE SACQUE.

THE following narrative is given from the pen, so far as memory permits, in the same character in which it was presented to the author's ear; nor has he claim to further praise, or to be more deeply censured, than in proportion to the good or bad judgment which he has employed in selecting his materials, as he has studiously avoided any attempt at ornament which might interfere with the simplicity of the tale.

At the same time it must be admitted that the particular class of stories which turns on the marvellous possesses a stronger influence when told than when committed to print. The volume taken up at noonday, though rehearsing the same incidents, conveys a much more feeble impression than is achieved by the voice of the speaker on a circle of fireside auditors, who hang upon the narrative as the narrator details the minute incidents which serve to give it authenticity, and lowers his voice with an affectation of mystery while he approaches the fearful and wonderful part. It was with such advantages that the present writer heard the

following events related, more than twenty years since, by the celebrated Miss Seward, of Lichfield, who to her numerous accomplishments added, in a remarkable degree, the power of narrative in private conversation. In its present form the tale must necessarily lose all the interest which was attached to it by the flexible voice and intelligent features of the gifted narrator. Yet still, read aloud, to an undoubting audience by the doubtful light of the closing evening, or in silence by a decaying taper and amidst the solitude of a half-lighted apartment, it may redeem its character as a good ghost-story. Miss Seward always affirmed that she had derived her information from an authentic source, although she suppressed the names of the two persons chiefly concerned. I will not avail myself of any particulars I may have since received concerning the localities of the detail, but suffer them to rest under the same general description in which they were first related to me; and, for the same reason, I will not add to or diminish the narrative by any circumstances, whether more or less material, but simply rehearse, as I heard it, a story of supernatural terror.

About the end of the American war, when the officers of Lord Cornwallis's army, which surrendered at Yorktown, and others, who had been made prisoners during the impolitic and ill-fated controversy, were returning to their own country, to relate their adventures and repose themselves after their fatigues, there was amongst them a general officer, to whom Miss S. gave the name of Browne, but merely, as I understood, to save the inconvenience of introducing a nameless agent in

the narrative. He was an officer of merit, as well as a gentleman of high consideration for family and attainments.

Some business had carried General Browne upon a tour through the western counties, when, in the conclusion of a morning stage, he found himself in the vicinity of a small country town, which presented a scene of uncommon beauty, and of a character peculiarly English.

The little town, with its stately old church, whose tower bore testimony to the devotion of ages long past, lay amidst pastures and corn-fields of small extent, but bounded and divided with hedgerow timber of great age and size. There were few marks of modern improvement. The environs of the place intimated neither the solitude of decay nor the bustle of novelty; the houses were old, but in good repair; and the beautiful little river murmured freely on its way to the left of the town, neither restrained by a dam nor bordered by a towing-path.

Upon a gentle eminence, nearly a mile to the southward of the town, were seen, amongst many venerable oaks and tangled thickets, the turrets of a castle as old as the wars of York and Lancaster, but which seemed to have received important alterations during the age of Elizabeth and her successor. It had not been a place of great size; but whatever accommodation it formerly afforded was, it must be supposed, still to be obtained within its walls; at least, such was the inference which General Browne drew from observing the smoke arise merrily from several of the ancient wreathed and carved chimney-stalks. The wall of the park ran alongside of the highway for two or

three hundred yards, and, through the different points by which the eye found glimpses into the woodland scenery, it seemed to be well stocked. Other points of view opened in succession, now a full one of the front of the old castle, and now a side glimpse at its particular towers; the former rich in all the *bizarrerie* of the Elizabethan school, while the simple and solid strength of other parts of the building seemed to show that they had been raised more for defence than ostentation.

Delighted with the partial glimpses which he obtained of the castle through the woods and glades by which this ancient feudal fortress was surrounded, our military traveller was determined to inquire whether it might not deserve a nearer view, and whether it contained family pictures or other objects of curiosity worthy of a stranger's visit, when, leaving the vicinity of the park, he rolled through a clean and well-paved street, and stopped at the door of a well-frequented inn.

Before ordering horses to proceed on his journey, General Browne made inquiries concerning the proprietor of the château which had so attracted his admiration, and was equally surprised and pleased at hearing in reply a nobleman named whom we shall call Lord Woodville. How fortunate! Much of Browne's early recollections, both at school and at college, had been connected with young Woodville, whom, by a few questions, he now ascertained to be the same with the owner of this fair domain. He had been raised to the peerage by the decease of his father a few months before, and, as the general learned from the landlord, the term of mourning being ended, was now taking possession of his paternal estate, in the

jovial season of merry autumn, accompanied by a select party of friends to enjoy the sports of a country famous for game.

This was delightful news to our traveller. Frank Woodville had been Richard Browne's fag at Eton, and his chosen intimate at Christ Church; their pleasures and their tasks had been the same; and the honest soldier's heart warmed to find his early friend in possession of so delightful a residence, and of an estate, as the landlord assured him with a nod and a wink, fully adequate to maintain and add to his dignity. Nothing was more natural than that the traveller should suspend a journey, which there was nothing to render hurried, to pay a visit to an old friend under such agreeable circumstances.

The fresh horses, therefore, had only the brief task of conveying the general's travelling-carriage to Woodville Castle. A porter admitted them at a modern Gothic lodge, built in that style to correspond with the castle itself, and at the same time rang a bell to give warning of the approach of visitors. Apparently the sound of the bell had suspended the separation of the company, bent on the various amusements of the morning; for, on entering the court of the château, several young men were lounging about in their sporting-dresses, looking at and criticising the dogs which the keepers held in readiness to attend their pastime. As General Browne alighted, the young lord came to the gate of the hall, and for an instant gazed, as at a stranger, upon the countenance of his friend, on which war, with its fatigues and its wounds, had made a great alteration. But the uncertainty lasted no longer than till the visitor

had spoken, and the hearty greeting which followed was such as can only be exchanged betwixt those who have passed together the merry days of careless boyhood or early youth.

"If I could have formed a wish, my dear Browne," said Lord Woodville, "it would have been to have you here, of all men, upon this occasion, which my friends are good enough to hold as a sort of holiday. Do not think you have been unwatched during the years you have been absent from us. I have traced you through your dangers, your triumphs, your misfortunes, and was delighted to see that, whether in victory or defeat, the name of my old friend was always distinguished with applause."

The general made a suitable reply, and congratulated his friend on his new dignities, and the possession of a place and domain so beautiful.

"Nay, you have seen nothing of it as yet," said Lord Woodville, "and I trust you do not mean to leave us till you are better acquainted with it. It is true, I confess, that my present party is pretty large, and the old house, like other places of the kind, does not possess so much accommodation as the extent of the outward walls appears to promise. But we can give you a comfortable old-fashioned room, and I venture to suppose that your campaigns have taught you to be glad of worse quarters."

The general shrugged his shoulders, and laughed. "I presume," he said, "the worst apartment in your château is considerably superior to the old tobacco-cask in which I was fain to take up my night's lodging when I was in the Bush, as the Virginians call it, with the light corps. There I

lay, like Diogenes himself, so delighted with my covering from the elements that I made a vain attempt to have it rolled on to my next quarters; but my commander for the time would give way to no such luxurious provision, and I took farewell of my beloved cask with tears in my eyes."

"Well, then, since you do not fear your quarters," said Lord Woodville, "you will stay with me a week at least. Of guns, dogs, fishing-rods, flies, and means of sport by sea and land, we have enough and to spare: you cannot pitch on an amusement but we will find the means of pursuing it. But if you prefer the gun and pointers, I will go with you myself, and see whether you have mended your shooting since you have been amongst the Indians of the back settlements."

The general gladly accepted his friendly host's proposal in all its points. After a morning of manly exercise, the company met at dinner, where it was the delight of Lord Woodville to conduce to the display of the high properties of his recovered friend so as to recommend him to his guests, most of whom were persons of distinction. He led General Browne to speak of the scenes he had witnessed; and as every word marked alike the brave officer and the sensible man, who retained possession of his cool judgment under the most imminent dangers, the company looked upon the soldier with general respect, as on one who had proved himself possessed of an uncommon portion of personal courage, that attribute, of all others, of which everybody desires to be thought possessed.

The day at Woodville Castle ended as usual in such mansions. The hospitality stopped within the limits of good order; music, in which the

young lord was a proficient, succeeded to the circulation of the bottle; cards and billiards, for those who preferred such amusements, were in readiness; but the exercise of the morning required early hours, and not long after eleven o'clock the guests began to retire to their several apartments.

The young lord himself conducted his friend, General Browne, to the chamber destined for him, which answered the description he had given of it, being comfortable, but old-fashioned. The bed was of the massive form used in the end of the seventeenth century, and the curtains of faded silk, heavily trimmed with tarnished gold. But then the sheets, pillows, and blankets looked delightful to the campaigner, when he thought of his "mansion the cask." There was an air of gloom in the tapestry hangings,(*g*) which, with their worn-out graces, curtained the walls of the little chamber, and gently undulated as the autumnal breeze found its way through the ancient lattice-window, which pattered and whistled as the air gained entrance. The toilet too, with its mirror, turbaned, after the manner of the beginning of the century, with a coiffure of murrey-coloured silk, and its hundred strange-shaped boxes, providing for arrangements which had been obsolete for more than fifty years, had an antique, and in so far a melancholy, aspect. But nothing could blaze more brightly and cheerfully than the two large wax candles; or, if aught could rival them, it was the flaming bickering fagots in the chimney, that sent at once their gleam and their warmth through the snug apartment; which, notwithstanding the general antiquity of its appearance, was not wanting in the least convenience

that modern habits rendered either necessary or desirable.

"This is an old-fashioned sleeping-apartment, General," said the young lord, "but I hope you find nothing that makes you envy your old tobacco-cask."

"I am not particular respecting my lodgings," replied the general; "yet, were I to make any choice, I would prefer this chamber by many degrees to the gayer and more modern rooms of your family mansion. Believe me, that when I unite its modern air of comfort with its venerable antiquity, and recollect that it is your lordship's property, I shall feel in better quarters here than if I were in the best hotel London could afford."

"I trust — I have no doubt — that you will find yourself as comfortable as I wish you, my dear General," said the young nobleman; and once more bidding his guest good-night, he shook him by the hand and withdrew.

The general once more looked round him, and internally congratulating himself on his return to peaceful life, the comforts of which were endeared by the recollection of the hardships and dangers he had lately sustained, undressed himself, and prepared for a luxurious night's rest.

Here, contrary to the custom of this species of tale, we leave the general in possession of his apartment until the next morning.

The company assembled for breakfast at an early hour, but without the appearance of General Browne, who seemed the guest that Lord Woodville was desirous of honouring above all whom his hospitality had assembled around him. He more than once expressed surprise at the general's

absence, and at length sent a servant to make inquiry after him. The man brought back information that General Browne had been walking abroad since an early hour of the morning, in defiance of the weather, which was misty and ungenial.

"The custom of a soldier," said the young nobleman to his friends: "many of them acquire habitual vigilance, and cannot sleep after the early hour at which their duty usually commands them to be alert."

Yet the explanation which Lord Woodville thus offered to the company seemed hardly satisfactory to his own mind, and it was in a fit of silence and abstraction that he awaited the return of the general. It took place near an hour after the breakfast-bell had rung. He looked fatigued and feverish. His hair, the powdering and arrangement of which was at this time one of the most important occupations of a man's whole day, and marked his fashion as much as, in the present time, the tying of a cravat, or the want of one, was dishevelled, uncurled, void of powder, and dank with dew. His clothes were huddled on with a careless negligence, remarkable in a military man, whose real or supposed duties are usually held to include some attention to the toilet; and his looks were haggard and ghastly in a peculiar degree.

"So you have stolen a march upon us this morning, my dear General," said Lord Woodville; "or you have not found your bed so much to your mind as I had hoped and you seemed to expect. How did you rest last night?"

"Oh, excellently well! remarkably well! never

better in my life," said General Browne rapidly, and yet with an air of embarrassment which was obvious to his friend. He then hastily swallowed a cup of tea, and, neglecting or refusing whatever else was offered, seemed to fall into a fit of abstraction.

"You will take the gun to-day, General?" said his friend and host, but had to repeat the question twice ere he received the abrupt answer, "No, my lord; I am sorry I cannot have the honour of spending another day with your lordship: my post horses are ordered, and will be here directly."

All who were present showed surprise, and Lord Woodville immediately replied, "Post horses, my good friend! What can you possibly want with them, when you promised to stay with me quietly for at least a week?"

"I believe," said the general, obviously much embarrassed, "that I might, in the pleasure of my first meeting with your lordship, have said something about stopping here a few days; but I have since found it altogether impossible."

"That is very extraordinary," answered the young nobleman. "You seemed quite disengaged yesterday, and you cannot have had a summons to-day; for our post has not come up from the town, and therefore you cannot have received any letters."

General Browne, without giving any further explanation, muttered something of indispensable business, and insisted on the absolute necessity of his departure in a manner which silenced all opposition on the part of his host, who saw that his resolution was taken, and forbore all further importunity.

"At least, however," he said, "permit me, my

dear Browne, since go you will or must, to show you the view from the terrace, which the mist, that is now rising, will soon display."

He threw open a sash-window, and stepped down upon the terrace as he spoke. The general followed him mechanically, but seemed little to attend to what his host was saying, as, looking across an extended and rich prospect, he pointed out the different objects worthy of observation. Thus they moved on till Lord Woodville had attained his purpose of drawing his guest entirely apart from the rest of the company, when, turning round upon him with an air of great solemnity, he addressed him thus:—

"Richard Browne, my old and very dear friend, we are now alone. Let me conjure you to answer me upon the word of a friend, and the honour of a soldier. How did you in reality rest during last night?"

"Most wretchedly indeed, my lord," answered the general, in the same tone of solemnity; "so miserably, that I would not run the risk of such a second night, not only for all the lands belonging to this castle, but for all the country which I see from this elevated point of view."

"This is most extraordinary," said the young lord, as if speaking to himself; "then there must be something in the reports concerning that apartment." Again turning to the general, he said, "For God's sake, my dear friend, be candid with me, and let me know the disagreeable particulars which have befallen you under a roof where, with consent of the owner, you should have met nothing save comfort."

The general seemed distressed by this appeal,

and paused a moment before he replied. "My dear lord," he at length said, "what happened to me last night is of a nature so peculiar and so unpleasant, that I could hardly bring myself to detail it even to your lordship, were it not that, independent of my wish to gratify any request of yours, I think that sincerity on my part may lead to some explanation about a circumstance equally painful and mysterious. To others, the communication I am about to make might place me in the light of a weak-minded, superstitious fool, who suffered his own imagination to delude and bewilder him; but you have known me in childhood and youth, and will not suspect me of having adopted in manhood the feelings and frailties from which my early years were free." Here he paused, and his friend replied:—

"Do not doubt my perfect confidence in the truth of your communication, however strange it may be," replied Lord Woodville. "I know your firmness of disposition too well to suspect you could be made the object of imposition, and am aware that your honour and your friendship will equally deter you from exaggerating whatever you may have witnessed."

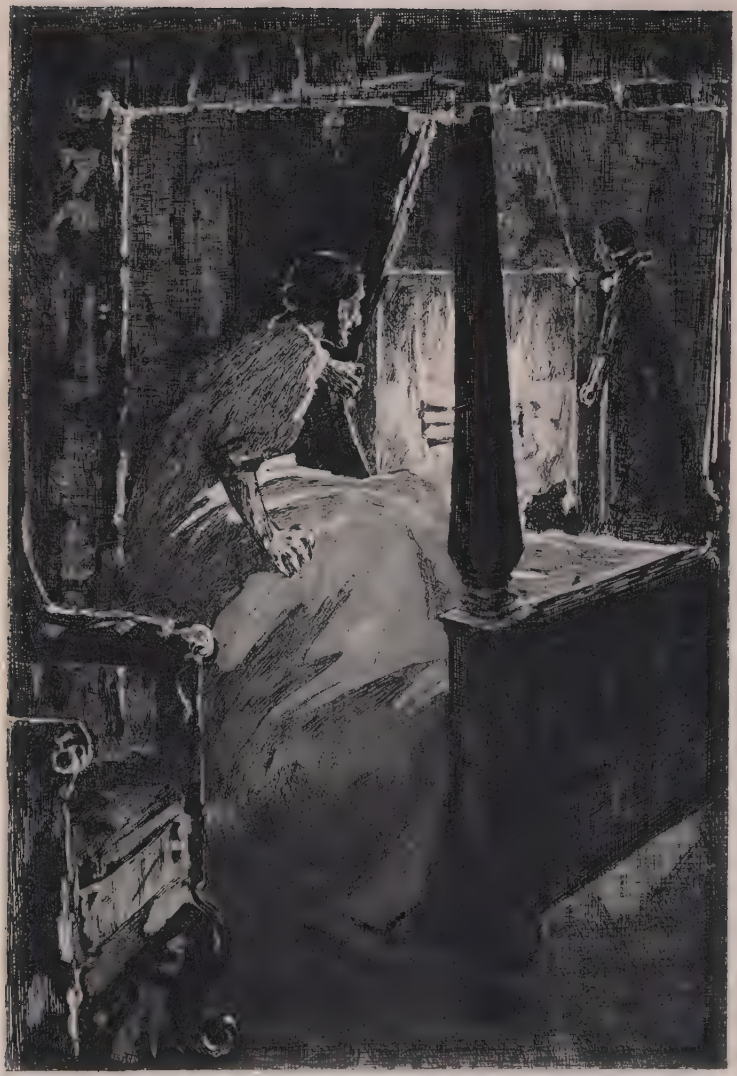
"Well then," said the general, "I will proceed with my story as well as I can, relying upon your candour; and yet distinctly feeling that I would rather face a battery than recall to my mind the odious recollections of last night."

He paused a second time, and then, perceiving that Lord Woodville remained silent and in an attitude of attention, he commenced, though not without obvious reluctance, the history of his night adventures in the Tapestried Chamber.

"I undressed and went to bed, so soon as your lordship left me yesterday evening; but the wood in the chimney, which nearly fronted my bed, blazed brightly and cheerfully, and, aided by a hundred exciting recollections of my childhood and youth, which had been recalled by the unexpected pleasure of meeting your lordship, prevented me from falling immediately asleep. I ought, however, to say that these reflections were all of a pleasant and agreeable kind, grounded on a sense of having for a time exchanged the labour, fatigues, and dangers of my profession for the enjoyments of a peaceful life, and the reunion of those friendly and affectionate ties which I had torn asunder at the rude summons of war.

"While such pleasing reflections were stealing over my mind, and gradually lulling me to slumber, I was suddenly aroused by a sound like that of the rustling of a silken gown, and the tapping of a pair of high-heeled shoes, as if a woman were walking in the apartment. Ere I could draw the curtain to see what the matter was, the figure of a little woman passed between the bed and the fire. The back of this form was turned to me, and I could observe, from the shoulders and neck, it was that of an old woman, whose dress was an old-fashioned gown, which, I think, ladies call a sacque; that is, a sort of robe completely loose in the body, but gathered into broad plaits upon the neck and shoulders, which fall down to the ground, and terminate in a species of train.

"I thought the intrusion singular enough, but never harboured for a moment the idea that what I saw was anything more than the mortal form of some old woman about the establishment, who had



a fancy to dress like her grandmother, and who having perhaps (as your lordship mentioned that you were rather straitened for room) been dislodged from her chamber for my accommodation, had forgotten the circumstance, and returned by twelve to her old haunt. Under this persuasion I moved myself in bed and coughed a little, to make the intruder sensible of my being in possession of the prèmises. She turned slowly round, but, gracious Heaven! my lord, what a countenance did she display to me! There was no longer any question what she was, or any thought of her being a living being. Upon a face which wore the fixed features of a corpse were imprinted the traces of the vilest and most hideous passions which had animated her while she lived. The body of some atrocious criminal seemed to have been given up from the grave, and the soul restored from the penal fire, in order to form, for a space, a union with the ancient accomplice of its guilt. I started up in bed, and sat upright, supporting myself on my palms, as I gazed on this horrible spectre. The hag made, as it seemed, a single and swift stride to the bed where I lay, and squatted herself down upon it, in precisely the same attitude which I had assumed in the extremity of horror, advancing her diabolical countenance within half a yard of mine, with a grin which seemed to intimate the malice and the derision of an incarnate fiend."

Here General Browne stopped, and wiped from his brow the cold perspiration with which the recollection of his horrible vision had covered it.

"My lord," he said, "I am no coward. I have been in all the mortal dangers incidental to my

profession, and I may truly boast that no man ever knew Richard Browne dishonour the sword he wears; but in these horrible circumstances, under the eyes and, as it seemed, almost in the grasp of an incarnation of an evil spirit, all firmness forsook me, all manhood melted from me like wax in the furnace, and I felt my hair individually bristle. The current of my life-blood ceased to flow, and I sank back in a swoon, as very a victim to panic terror as ever was a village girl or a child ten years old. How long I lay in this condition I cannot pretend to guess.

"But I was roused by the castle clock striking one, so loud that it seemed as if it were in the very room. It was some time before I dared open my eyes, lest they should again encounter the horrible spectacle. When, however, I summoned courage to look up, she was no longer visible. My first idea was to pull my bell, wake the servants, and remove to a garret or a hay-loft, to be insured against a second visitation. Nay, I will confess the truth, that my resolution was altered, not by the shame of exposing myself, but by the fear that, as the bell-cord hung by the chimney, I might, in making my way to it, be again crossed by the fiendish hag, who, I figured to myself, might be still lurking about some corner of the apartment.

"I will not pretend to describe what hot and cold fever-fits tormented me for the rest of the night, through broken sleep, weary vigils, and that dubious state which forms the neutral ground between them. An hundred terrible objects appeared to haunt me; but there was the great difference betwixt the vision which I have described

and those which followed, that I knew the last to be deceptions of my own fancy and over-excited nerves.

"Day at last appeared, and I rose from my bed ill in health and humiliated in mind. I was ashamed of myself as a man and a soldier, and still more so at feeling my own extreme desire to escape from the haunted apartment, which, however, conquered all other considerations; so that, huddling on my clothes with the most careless haste, I made my escape from your lordship's mansion, to seek in the open air some relief to my nervous system, shaken as it was by this horrible rencontre with a visitant, for such I must believe her, from the other world. Your lordship has now heard the cause of my discomposure, and of my sudden desire to leave your hospitable castle. In other places I trust we may often meet; but God protect me from ever spending a second night under that roof!"

Strange as the general's tale was, he spoke with such a deep air of conviction that it cut short all the usual commentaries which are made on such stories. Lord Woodville never once asked him if he was sure he did not dream of the apparition, or suggested any of the possibilities by which it is fashionable to explain supernatural appearances, as wild vagaries of the fancy or deceptions of the optic nerves. On the contrary, he seemed deeply impressed with the truth and reality of what he had heard, and after a considerable pause regretted, with much appearance of sincerity, that his early friend should in his house have suffered so severely.

"I am the more sorry for your pain, my dear

Browne," he continued, "that it is the unhappy, though most unexpected, result of an experiment of my own. You must know that, for my father and grandfather's time at least, the apartment which was assigned to you last night had been shut on account of reports that it was disturbed by supernatural sights and noises. When I came, a few weeks since, into possession of the estate, I thought the accommodation which the castle afforded for my friends was not extensive enough to permit the inhabitants of the invisible world to retain possession of a comfortable sleeping-apartment. I therefore caused the Tapestried Chamber, as we call it, to be opened; and, without destroying its air of antiquity, I had such new articles of furniture placed in it as became the modern times. Yet as the opinion that the room was haunted very strongly prevailed among the domestics, and was also known in the neighbourhood and to many of my friends, I feared some prejudice might be entertained by the first occupant of the Tapestried Chamber which might tend to revive the evil report which it had laboured under, and so disappoint my purpose of rendering it a useful part of the house. I must confess, my dear Browne, that your arrival yesterday, agreeable to me for a thousand reasons besides, seemed the most favourable opportunity of removing the unpleasant rumours which attached to the room, since your courage was indubitable, and your mind free of any preoccupation on the subject. I could not, therefore, have chosen a more fitting subject for my experiment."

"Upon my life," said General Browne, somewhat hastily, "I am infinitely obliged to your

lordship — very particularly indebted indeed. I am likely to remember for some time the consequences of the experiment, as your lordship is pleased to call it."

"Nay, now you are unjust, my dear friend," said Lord Woodville. "You have only to reflect for a single moment, in order to be convinced that I could not augur the possibility of the pain to which you have been so unhappily exposed. I was yesterday morning a complete sceptic on the subject of supernatural appearances. Nay, I am sure that had I told you what was said about that room, those very reports would have induced you, by your own choice, to select it for your accommodation. It was my misfortune, perhaps my error, but really cannot be termed my fault, that you have been afflicted so strangely."

"Strangely indeed!" said the general, resuming his good temper; "and I acknowledge that I have no right to be offended with your lordship for treating me like what I used to think myself — a man of some firmness and courage. But I see my post horses are arrived, and I must not detain your lordship from your amusement."

"Nay, my old friend," said Lord Woodville, "since you cannot stay with us another day, which, indeed, I can no longer urge, give me at least half an hour more. You used to love pictures, and I have a gallery of portraits, some of them by Vandyke, representing ancestry to whom this property and castle formerly belonged. I think that several of them will strike you as possessing merit."

General Browne accepted the invitation, though somewhat unwillingly. It was evident he was not to breathe freely or at ease till he left Woodville

Castle far behind him. He could not refuse his friend's invitation, however, and the less so that he was a little ashamed of the peevishness which he had displayed towards his well-meaning entertainer.

The general, therefore, followed Lord Woodville through several rooms into a long gallery hung with pictures, which the latter pointed out to his guest, telling the names and giving some account of the personages whose portraits presented themselves in progression. General Browne was but little interested in the details which these accounts conveyed to him. They were, indeed, of the kind which are usually found in an old family gallery. Here was a Cavalier who had ruined the estate in the royal cause; there, a fine lady who had reinstated it by contracting a match with a wealthy Roundhead. There hung a gallant who had been in danger for corresponding with the exiled Court at Saint Germains; here, one had taken arms for William at the Revolution; and there, a third that had thrown his weight alternately into the scale of Whig and Tory.

While Lord Woodville was cramming these words into his guest's ear, "against the stomach of his sense," they gained the middle of the gallery, when he beheld General Browne suddenly start, and assume an attitude of the utmost surprise, not unmixed with fear, as his eyes were caught and suddenly riveted by a portrait of an old lady in a sacque, the fashionable dress of the end of the seventeenth century.

"There she is!" he exclaimed; "there she is, in form and features, though inferior in demoniac expression to the accursed hag who visited me last night!"

"If that be the case," said the young nobleman, "there can remain no longer any doubt of the horrible reality of your apparition. That is the picture of a wretched ancestress of mine, of whose crimes a black and fearful catalogue is recorded in a family history in my charter-chest. The recital of them would be too horrible; it is enough to say that in yon fatal apartment incest and unnatural murder were committed. I will restore it to the solitude to which the better judgment of those who preceded me had consigned it; and never shall any one, so long as I can prevent it, be exposed to a repetition of the supernatural horrors which could shake such courage as yours."

Thus the friends, who had met with such glee, parted in a very different mood; Lord Woodville to command the Tapestried Chamber to be unmantled and the door built up, and General Browne to seek in some less beautiful country, and with some less dignified friend, forgetfulness of the painful night which he had passed in Woodville Castle.

DEATH OF THE LAIRD'S JOCK.

DEATH OF THE LAIRD'S JOCK.

[The manner in which this trifle was introduced at the time to Mr. F. M. Reynolds, editor of "The Keepsake" of 1828, leaves no occasion for a preface.]

August 1831.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE KEEPSAKE."

You have asked me, sir, to point out a subject for the pencil, and I feel the difficulty of complying with your request; although I am not certainly unaccustomed to literary composition, or a total stranger to the stores of history and tradition, which afford the best copies for the painter's art. But although *sicut pictura poesis* is an ancient and undisputed axiom, although poetry and painting both address themselves to the same object of exciting the human imagination, by presenting to it pleasing or sublime images of ideal scenes; yet, the one conveying itself through the ears to the understanding, and the other applying itself only to the eyes, the subjects which are best suited to the bard or tale-teller are often totally unfit for painting, where the artist must present in a single glance all that his art has power to tell us. The artist can neither recapitulate the past nor intimate

the future. The single *now* is all which he can present; and hence, unquestionably, many subjects which delight us in poetry or in narrative, whether real or fictitious, cannot with advantage be transferred to the canvas.

Being in some degree aware of these difficulties, though doubtless unacquainted both with their extent and the means by which they may be modified or surmounted, I have, nevertheless, ventured to draw up the following traditional narrative as a story in which, when the general details are known, the interest is so much concentrated in one strong moment of agonising passion, that it can be understood, and sympathised with, at a single glance. I therefore presume that it may be acceptable as a hint to some one among the numerous artists who have of late years distinguished themselves as rearing up and supporting the British school.

Enough has been said and sung about

> The well contested ground,
> The warlike Border-land —

to render the habits of the tribes who inhabited them before the union of England and Scotland familiar to most of your readers. The rougher and sterner features of their character were softened by their attachment to the fine arts, from which has arisen the saying that on the frontiers every dale had its battle and every river its song. A rude species of chivalry was in constant use, and single combats were practised as the amusement of the few intervals of truce which suspended the exercise of war. The inveteracy of this custom may be inferred from the following incident.

Bernard Gilpin, the apostle of the north, the

first who undertook to preach the Protestant doctrines to the Border dalesmen, was surprised, on entering one of their churches, to see a gauntlet or mail-glove hanging above the altar. Upon inquiring the meaning of a symbol so indecorous being displayed in that sacred place, he was informed by the clerk that the glove was that of a famous swordsman, who hung it there as an emblem of a general challengé and gage of battle, to any who should dare to take the fatal token down. "Reach it to me," said the reverend churchman. The clerk and sexton equally declined the perilous office, and the good Bernard Gilpin was obliged to remove the glove with his own hands, desiring those who were present to inform the champion that he, and no other, had possessed himself of the gage of defiance. But the champion was as much ashamed to face Bernard Gilpin as the officials of the church had been to displace his pledge of combat.

The date of the following story is about the latter years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and the events took place in Liddesdale, a hilly and pastoral district of Roxburghshire, which on a part of its boundary is divided from England only by a small river.

During the good old times of *rugging and riving* (that is, tugging and tearing), under which term the disorderly doings of the warlike age are affectionately remembered, this valley was principally cultivated by the sept or clan of the Armstrongs. The chief of this warlike race was the Laird of Mangerton. At the period of which I speak, the estate of Mangerton, with the power and dignity of chief, was possessed by John Armstrong, a man

of great size, strength, and courage. While his father was alive he was distinguished from others of his clan who bore the same name by the epithet of the *Laird's Jock* — that is to say, the Laird's son Jock, or Jack. This name he distinguished by so many bold and desperate achievements that he retained it even after his father's death, and is mentioned under it both in authentic records and in tradition. Some of his feats are recorded in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, and others mentioned in contemporary chronicles.

At the species of singular combat which we have described the Laird's Jock was unrivalled, and no champion of Cumberland, Westmoreland, or Northumberland could endure the sway of the huge two-handed sword which he wielded, and which few others could even lift. This "awful sword," as the common people term it, was as dear to him as Durindana or Fushberta to their respective masters, and was nearly as formidable to his enemies as those renowned falchions proved to the foes of Christendom. The weapon had been bequeathed to him by a celebrated English outlaw named Hobbie Noble, who, having committed some deed for which he was in danger from justice, fled to Liddesdale, and became a follower, or rather a brother-in-arms, to the renowned Laird's Jock; till, venturing into England with a small escort, a faithless guide, and with a light single-handed sword instead of his ponderous brand, Hobbie Noble, attacked by superior numbers, was made prisoner and executed.

With this weapon, and by means of his own strength and address, the Laird's Jock maintained the reputation of the best swordsman on the Border

side, and defeated or slew many who ventured to dispute with him the formidable title.

But years pass on with the strong and the brave as with the feeble and the timid. In process of time the Laird's Jock grew incapable of wielding his weapons, and finally of all active exertion, even of the most ordinary kind. The disabled champion became at length totally bed-ridden, and entirely dependent for his comfort on the pious duties of an only daughter, his perpetual attendant and companion.

Besides this dutiful child, the Laird's Jock had an only son, upon whom devolved the perilous task of leading the clan to battle, and maintaining the warlike renown of his native country, which was now disputed by the English upon many occasions. The young Armstrong was active, brave, and strong, and brought home from dangerous adventures many tokens of decided success. Still the ancient chief conceived, as it would seem, that his son was scarce yet entitled by age and experience to be intrusted with the two-handed sword, by the use of which he had himself been so dreadfully distinguished.

At length an English champion, one of the name of Foster (if I rightly recollect), had the audacity to send a challenge to the best swordsman in Liddesdale; and young Armstrong, burning for chivalrous distinction, accepted the challenge.

The heart of the disabled old man swelled with joy when he heard that the challenge was passed and accepted, and the meeting fixed at a neutral spot, used as the place of rencontre upon such occasions, and which he himself had distinguished by numerous victories. He exulted so much in the conquest which he anticipated, that, to nerve his

son to still bolder exertions, he conferred upon him, as champion of his clan and province, the celebrated weapon which he had hitherto retained in his own custody.

This was not all. When the day of combat arrived, the Laird's Jock, in spite of his daughter's affectionate remonstrances, determined, though he had not left his bed for two years, to be a personal witness of the duel. His will was still a law to his people, who bore him on their shoulders, wrapped in plaids and blankets, to the spot where the combat was to take place, and seated him on a fragment of rock, which is still called the Laird's Jock's stone. There he remained with eyes fixed on the lists or barrier, within which the champions were about to meet. His daughter, having done all she could for his accommodation, stood motionless beside him, divided between anxiety for his health and for the event of the combat to her beloved brother. Ere yet the fight began, the old men gazed on their chief, now seen for the first time after several years, and sadly compared his altered features and wasted frame with the paragon of strength and manly beauty which they once remembered. The young men gazed on his large form and powerful make as upon some antediluvian giant who had survived the destruction of the Flood.

But the sound of the trumpets on both sides recalled the attention of every one to the lists, surrounded as they were by numbers of both nations eager to witness the event of the day. The combatants met in the lists. It is needless to describe the struggle: the Scottish champion fell. Foster, placing his foot on his antagonist, seized on the redoubted sword, so precious in the eyes of its aged

owner, and brandished it over his head as a trophy of his conquest. The English shouted in triumph. But the despairing cry of the aged champion, who saw his country dishonoured, and his sword, long the terror of their race, in possession of an Englishman, was heard high above the acclamations of victory. He seemed, for an instant, animated by all his wonted power; for he started from the rock on which he sat, and while the garments with which he had been invested fell from his wasted frame, and showed the ruins of his strength, he tossed his arms wildly to heaven, and uttered a cry of indignation, horror, and despair which, tradition says, was heard to a preternatural distance, and resembled the cry of a dying lion more than a human sound.

His friends received him in their arms as he sank utterly exhausted by the effort, and bore him back to his castle in mute sorrow; while his daughter at once wept for her brother, and endeavoured to mitigate and soothe the despair of her father. But this was impossible; the old man's only tie to life was rent rudely asunder, and his heart had broken with it. The death of his son had no part in his sorrow: if he thought of him at all, it was as the degenerate boy, through whom the honour of his country and clan had been lost, and he died in the course of three days, never even mentioning his name, but pouring out unintermitted lamentations for the loss of his noble sword.

I conceive that the moment when the disabled chief was roused into a last exertion by the agony of the moment is favourable to the object of a painter. He might obtain the full advantage of contrasting the form of the rugged old man, in the extremity of furious despair, with the softness and beauty of

the female form. The fatal field might be thrown into perspective, so as to give full effect to these two principal figures, and with the single explanation, that the piece represented a soldier beholding his son slain and the honour of his country lost, the picture would be sufficiently intelligible at the first glance. If it was thought necessary to show more clearly the nature of the conflict, it might be indicated by the pennon of St. George being displayed at one end of the lists, and that of St. Andrew at the other.

I remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

AUTHOR'S NOTES.

Note I. p. 3. — Holyrood.

The reader may be gratified with Hector Boece's narrative of the original foundation of the famous abbey of Holyrood, or the Holy Cross, as given in Bellenden's translation : —

"Eftir death of Alexander the first, his brothir David come out of Ingland, and wes crownit at Scone, the yeir of God MCXXIV yeiris, and did gret justice, eftir his coronation, in all partis of his realme. He had na weris during the time of King Hary ; and wes so pietuous, that he sat daylie in judgement, to caus his pure commonis to have justice ; and causit the actionis of his noblis to be decidit be his othir jugis. He gart ilk juge redres the skaithis that come to the party be his wrang sentence ; throw quhilk, he decorit his realm with mony nobil actis, and ejeckit the vennomus custome of riotus cheir, quhilk wes inducit afore be Inglismen, quhen thay com with Quene Margaret ; for the samin wes noisum to al gud maneris, makand his pepil tender and effeminat.

"In the fourt yeir of his regne, this nobill prince come to visie the madin Castell of Edinburgh. At this time, all the boundis of Scotland were ful of woddis, lesouris, and medois ; for the countre wes more gevin to store of bestiall, than ony productioun of cornis ; and about this castell was ane gret forest, full of haris, hindis, toddis, and sicklike maner of beistis. Now was the Rude Day cumin, called the Exaltation of the Croce ; and, becaus the samin wes ane hie solempne day, the king past to his contemplation. Eftir the messis wer done with maist solempnitie and reverence, comperit afore him mony young and insolent baronis of Scotland, richt desirus to haif sum plesur and solace, be chace of hundis in the said forest. At this time wes with the king ane man of singulare and devoit life, namit Alkwine, channon eftir the ordour of Sanct Augustine, quhilk wes lang time confessoure, afore, to King David in Ingland, the time that he wes Erle of Huntingtoun and Northumbirland. This religious man dissuadit the king, be mony reasonis, to pas to this huntis ; and allegit the day wes so solempne, be reverence of the haly croce, that he suld gif him erar, for that

day, to contemplation, than ony othir exersition. Nochtheles, his dissuasion is litill avalit; for the king wes finallie so provokit, be inoportune solicitatioun of his baronis, that he past, nochtwithstanding the solempnite of this day, to his hountis. At last, quhen he wes cumin throw the vail that lyis to the gret eist fra the said castell, quhare now lyis the Canongait, the staik past throw the wod with sic noyis and din of rachis and bugillis, that all the bestis were rasit fra thair dennis. Now wes the king cumin to the fute of the crag, and all his nobilis severit, heir and thair, fra him, at thair game and solace; quhen suddenlie apperit to his sicht, the fairist hart that evir wes sene afore with levand creature. The noyis and din of this hart rinnand, as apperit, with awful and braid tindis, maid the kingis hors so effrayit, that na renzeis micht hald him; bot ran, perforce, ouir mire and mossis, away with the king. Nochtheles, the hart followit so fast, that he dang baith the king and his hors to the ground. Than the king kest abak his handis betwix the tindis of this hart, to haif savit him fra the strak thairof; and the haly croce slaid, incontinent, in his handis. The hart fled away with gret violence, and evanist in the same place quhare now springis the Rude Well. The pepil richt affrayitly returnit to him out of all partis of the wod, to comfort him efter his trubill; and fell on kneis, devotly adoring the haly croce; for it was not cumin but sum hevinly providence, as weill apperis; for thair is na man can schaw of quhat mater it is of, metal or tre. Sone eftir, the king returnit to his castell; and in the nicht following, he was admonist, be ane vision in his sleip, to big ane abbay of channonis regular in the same place quhare he gat the croce. Als sone as he was awalkinnit, he schew his visione to Alkwine, his confessoure; and he na thing suspended his gud mind, bot erar inflammit him with maist fervent devotion thairto. The king, incontinent, send his traist servandis in France and Flanderis, and brocht richt crafty masonis to big this abbay; syne dedicat it in the honour of this haly croce. The croce remanit continewally in the said abbay, to the time of King David Bruce; quhilk was unhappily tane with it at Durame, quhare it is haldin yit in gret veneration."— Boece, book xii. ch. 16.

It is by no means clear what Scottish prince first built a palace, properly so called, in the precincts of this renowned seat of sanctity. The abbey, endowed by successive sovereigns and many powerful nobles with munificent gifts of lands and tithes, came, in process of time, to be one of the most important of the ecclesiastical corporations of Scotland; and as early as the days of Robert Bruce parliaments were held occasionally within its buildings. We have evidence that James IV. had

a royal lodging adjoining to the cloister; but it is generally agreed that the first considerable edifice for the accommodation of the royal family erected here was that of James V., anno 1525, great part of which still remains, and forms the north-western side of the existing palace. The more modern buildings which complete the quadrangle were erected by King Charles II. The name of the old conventual church was used as the parish church of the Canongate from the period of the Reformation, until James II. claimed it for his chapel royal, and had it fitted up accordingly in a style of splendour which grievously outraged the feelings of his Presbyterian subjects. The roof of this fragment of a once magnificent church fell in in the year 1768, and it has remained ever since in a state of desolation. — For fuller particulars, see the "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland," or the "History of Holyrood," by Mr. CHARLES MACKIE.

The greater part of this ancient palace is now again occupied by his Majesty Charles the Tenth of France, and the rest of that illustrious family, which, in former ages so closely connected by marriage and alliance with the house of Stuart, seems to have been destined to run a similar career of misfortune. *Requiescant in pace!*

Note II. p. 42. — STEELE, THE COVENANTER.

The following extract from Swift's Life of Creichton gives the particulars of the bloody scene alluded to in the text: —

"Having drank hard one night, I (Creichton) dreamed that I had found Captain David Steele, a notorious rebel, in one of the five farmers' houses on a mountain in the shire of Clydesdale, and parish of Lismahago, within eight miles of Hamilton, a place that I was well acquainted with. This man was head of the rebels, since the affair of Airs-Moss; having succeeded to Hackston, who had been there taken, and afterward hanged, as the reader has already heard; for, as to Robert Hamilton, who was then Commander-in-chief at Bothwell Bridge, he appeared no more among them, but fled, as it was believed, to Holland.

"Steele, and his father before him, held a farm in the estate of Hamilton, within two or three miles of that town. When he betook himself to arms, the farm lay waste, and the Duke could find no other person who would venture to take it; whereupon his Grace sent several messages to Steele, to know the reason why he

kept the farm waste. The Duke received no other answer, than that he would keep it waste, in spite of him and the king too; whereupon his Grace, at whose table I had always the honour to be a welcome guest, desired I would use my endeavours to destroy that rogue, and I would oblige him for ever.

. . . . . .

"I return to my story. When I awaked out of my dream, as I had done before in the affair of Wilson (and I desire the same apology I made in the introduction to these Memoirs may serve for both), I presently rose, and ordered thirty-six dragoons to be at the place appointed by break of day. When we arrived thither, I sent a party to each of the five farmers' houses. This villain Steele had murdered above forty of the king's subjects in cold blood; and, as I was informed, had often laid snares to entrap me; but it happened, that although he usually kept a gang to attend him, yet at this time he had none, when he stood in the greatest need. One of the party found him in one of the farmers' houses, just as I happened to dream. The dragoons first searched all the rooms below without success, till two of them hearing somebody stirring over their heads, went up a pair of turnpike stairs. Steele had put on his clothes, while the search was making below; the chamber where he lay was called the Chamber of Deese,[1] which is the name given to a room where the laird lies, when he comes to a tenant's house. Steele suddenly opening the door, fired a blunderbuss down at the two dragoons, as they were coming up the stairs; but the bullets grazing against the side of the turnpike, only wounded, and did not kill them. Then Steele violently threw himself down the stairs among them, and made towards the door to save his life, but lost it upon the spot; for the dragoons who guarded the house dispatched him with their broadswords. I was not with the party when he was killed, being at that time employed in searching at one of the other houses, but I soon found what had happened, by hearing the noise of the shot made with the blunderbuss; from whence I returned straight to Lanark, and immediately sent one of the dragoons express to General Drummond at Edinburgh."—SWIFT'S *Works*, vol. xii. (*Memoirs of Captain John Creichton*), pages 57–59, Edit. Edinb. 1824.

Wodrow gives a different account of this exploit—"In December this year (1686), David Steil, in the parish of Lismahagow, was surprised in the fields by Lieutenant

[1] Or chamber of state; so called from the *dais*, or canopy and elevation of floor, which distinguished the part of old halls which was occupied by those of high rank. Hence the phrase was obliquely used to signify state in general.

Creichton, and after his surrender of himself on quarters, he was in a very little time most barbarously shot, and lies buried in the churchyard there."

Note III. p. 80. — Iron Rasp.

The ingenious Mr. R. Chambers, in his "Traditions of Edinburgh," gives the following account of the forgotten rasp or risp: —

"This house had a *pin* or *risp* at the door, instead of the more modern convenience, a knocker. The pin, rendered interesting by the figure which it makes in Scottish song, was formed of a small rod of iron, twisted or notched, which was placed perpendicularly, starting out a little from the door, and bore a small ring of the same metal, which an applicant for admittance drew rapidly up and down the *nicks*, so as to produce a grating sound. Sometimes the rod was simply stretched across the *vizzying* hole, a convenient aperture through which the porter could take cognisance of the person applying; in which case it acted also as a stanchion. These were almost all disused about sixty years ago, when knockers were generally substituted as more genteel. But knockers at that time did not long remain in repute, though they have never been altogether superseded, even by bells, in the Old Town. The comparative merit of knockers and pins was for a long time a subject of doubt, and many knockers got their heads twisted off in the course of the dispute."

Note IV. p. 89. — Countess of Eglinton.

Susannah Kennedy, daughter of Sir Archibald Kennedy of Cullean, Bart., by Elizabeth Lesly, daughter of David Lord Newark, third wife of Alexander, 9th Earl of Eglinton, and mother of the 10th and 11th Earls. She survived her husband, who died 1729, no less than fifty-seven years, and died, March 1780, in her 91st year. Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," published 1726, is dedicated to her, in verse, by Hamilton of Bangour.

The following account of this distinguished lady is taken from Boswell's "Life of Johnson" by Mr. Croker: —

"Lady Margaret Dalrymple, only daughter of John Earl of Stair, married in 1700 to Hugh, third Earl of Loudoun. She died

in 1777, aged *one hundred.* Of this venerable lady, and of the Countess of Eglintoune, whom Johnson visited next day, he thus speaks in his *Journey.* — 'Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life, in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age than the Lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality, one of whom (Lady Loudoun), in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers; and the other (Lady Eglintoun) had attained her eighty-fourth year, without any diminution of her vivacity, and little reason to accuse time of depredations on her beauty.'

. . . . . .

"Lady Eglintoune, though she was now in her eighty-fifth year, and had lived in the retirement of the country for almost half a century, was still a very agreeable woman. She was of the noble house of Kennedy, and had all the elevation which the consciousness of such birth inspires. Her figure was majestic, her manners high-bred, her reading extensive, and her conversation elegant. She had been the admiration of the gay circles of life, and the patroness of poets. Dr. Johnson was delighted with his reception here. Her principles in church and state were congenial with his. She knew all his merit, and had heard much of him from her son, Earl Alexander, who loved to cultivate the acquaintance of men of talents in every department.

. . . . . .

"In the course of our conversation this day, it came out that Lady Eglintoune was married the year before Dr. Johnson was born; upon which she graciously said to him, that she might have been his mother, and that she now adopted him; and when we were going away, she embraced him, saying, 'My dear son, farewell!' My friend was much pleased with this day's entertainment and owned that I had done well to force him out.

. . . . . .

"At Sir Alexander Dick's, from that absence of mind to which every man is at times subject, I told, in a blundering manner, Lady Eglintoune's complimentary adoption of Dr. Johnson as her son; for I unfortunately stated that her ladyship adopted him as her son, in consequence of her having been married the year *after* he was born. Dr. Johnson instantly corrected me. 'Sir, don't you perceive that you are defaming the Countess? For, supposing me to be her son, and that she was not married till the year after my birth, I must have been her *natural* son.' A young lady of quality who was present very handsomely said, 'Might not the son have justified the fault?' My friend was much flattered by this compliment, which he never forgot. When in more than

ordinary spirits, and talking of his journey in Scotland, he has called to me, 'Boswell, what was it that the young lady of quality said of me at Sir Alexander Dick's?' Nobody will doubt that I was happy in repeating it."

Note V. p. 194. — Earl of Winton.

The incident here alluded to is thus narrated in Nichols's "Progresses of James I," vol. iii. p. 306: —

"The family" (of Winton) "owed its first elevation to the union of Sir Christopher Seton with a sister of King Robert Bruce. With King James VI. they acquired great favour, who, having created his brother Earl of Dunfermline in 1599, made Robert, seventh Lord Seton, Earl of Winton in 1600. Before the King's accession to the English throne, his Majesty and the Queen were frequently at Seton, where the Earl kept a very hospitable table, at which all foreigners of quality were entertained on their visits to Scotland. His Lordship died in 1603, and was buried on the 5th of April, on the very day the King left Edinburgh for England. His Majesty, we are told, was pleased to rest himself at the south-west round of the orchard of Seton, on the highway, till the funeral was over, that he might not withdraw the noble company; and he said that he had lost a good, faithful, and loyal subject."

Note VI. p. 96. — M'Gregor of Glenstrae.

"The 2 of Octr: (1603) Allaster MacGregor of Glenstrae tane be the laird Arkynles, bot escapit againe; bot after taken be the Earle of Argyll the 4 of Januarii, and brought to Edr: the 9 of Januar: 1604, wt: 18 mae of hes friendes MacGregors. He wes convoyit to Berwick be the gaird, conform to the Earle's promes; for he promesit to put him out of Scottis grund: Sua he keipit an Hielandman's promes, in respect he sent the gaird to convoy him out of Scottis grund; bot yai wer not directit to pairt wt: him, bot to fetch him bak againe. The 18 of Januar, he came at evin againe to Edinburghe; and upone the 20 day, he was hangit at the crosse, and ij of his freindes and name, upon ane gallows: himself being chieff, he was hangit his awin hight above the rest of hes freindis." — Birrell's "Diary" (in Dalzell's "Fragments of Scottish History"), pp. 60, 61.

Note VII. p. 106. — Loch Awe.

"Loch Awe, upon the banks of which the scene of action took place, is thirty-four miles in length. The north side is bounded by wide moors and inconsiderable hills, which occupy an extent of country from twelve to twenty miles in breadth, and the whole of this space is enclosed as by circumvallation. Upon the north it is barred by Loch Etive, on the south by Loch Awe, and on the east by the dreadful Pass of Brander, through which an arm of the latter lake opens, at about four miles from its eastern extremity, and discharges the river Awe into the former. The pass is about three miles in length; its east side is bounded by the almost inaccessible steeps which form the base of the vast and rugged mountain of Cruachan. The crags rise in some places almost perpendicularly from the water, and for their chief extent show no space nor level at their feet, but a rough and narrow edge of stony beach. Upon the whole of these cliffs grows a thick and interwoven wood of all kinds of trees, both timber, dwarf, and coppice; no track existed through the wilderness, but a winding path, which sometimes crept along the precipitous height, and sometimes descended in a straight pass along the margin of the water. Near the extremity of the defile, a narrow level opened between the water and the crag; but a great part of this, as well as of the preceding steeps, was formerly enveloped in a thicket, which showed little facility to the feet of any but the martins and wild cats. Along the west side of the pass lies a wall of sheer and barren crags. From behind they rise in rough, uneven, and heathy declivities, out of the wide moor before mentioned, between Loch Etive and Loch Awe; but in front they terminate abruptly in the most frightful precipices, which form the whole side of the pass, and descend at one fall into the water which fills its trough. At the north end of the barrier, and at the termination of the pass, lies that part of the cliff which is called Craiganuni; at its foot the arm of the lake gradually contracts its water to a very narrow space, and at length terminates at two rocks (called the Rocks of Brander), which form a strait channel, something resembling the lock of a canal. From this outlet there is a continual descent towards Lock Etive, and from hence the river Awe pours out its current in a furious stream, foaming over a bed broken with holes, and cumbered with masses of granite and whinstone.

"If ever there was a bridge near Craiganuni in ancient times, it must have been at the Rocks of Brander. From the days of Wallace to those of General Wade there were never passages of this kind but in places of great necessity, too narrow for a boat, and too wide for a leap; even then they were but an unsafe footway formed of the trunks of trees placed transversely from rock to rock, unstripped of their bark, and destitute of either plank or rail. For such a structure there is no place in the neighbourhood of Craiganuni but at the rocks above mentioned. In the lake and on the river the water is far too wide; but at the strait the space is not greater than might be crossed by a tall mountain pine, and the rocks on either side are formed by nature like a pier. That this point was always a place of passage is rendered probable by its facility, and the use of recent times. It is not long since it was the common gate of the country on either side the river and the pass: the mode of crossing is yet in the memory of people living, and was performed by a little curragh moored on either side the water, and a stout cable fixed across the stream from bank to bank, by which the passengers drew themselves across in the manner still practised in places of the same nature. It is no argument against the existence of a bridge in former times that the above method only existed in ours, rather than a passage of that kind which would seem the more improved expedient. The contradiction is sufficiently accounted for by the decay of timber in the neighbourhood. Of old, both oaks and firs of an immense size abounded within a very inconsiderable distance; but it is now many years since the destruction of the forests of Glen Etive and Glen Orchy has deprived the country of all the trees of sufficient size to cross the strait of Brander; and it is probable that the curragh was not introduced till the want of timber had disenabled the inhabitants of the country from maintaining a bridge. It only further remains to be noticed that at some distance below the Rocks of Brander there was formerly a ford, which was used for cattle in the memory of people living; from the narrowness of the passage, the force of the stream, and the broken bed of the river, it was, however, a dangerous pass, and could only be attempted with safety at leisure and by experience." — Notes to "The Bridal of Caolchairn." (*h*)

Note VIII. p. 107. — Battle betwixt the Armies of the Bruce and MacDougal of Lorn.

"But the King, whose dear-bought experience in war had taught him extreme caution, remained in the Braes of Balquhidder till he had acquired by his spies and outskirries a perfect knowledge of the disposition of the army of Lorn, and the intention of its leader. He then divided his force into two columns, intrusting the command of the first, in which he placed his archers and lightest armed troops, to Sir James Douglas, whilst he himself took the leading of the other, which consisted principally of his knights and barons. On approaching the defile, Bruce despatched Sir James Douglas by a pathway which the enemy had neglected to occupy, with directions to advance silently, and gain the heights above and in front of the hilly ground where the men of Lorn were concealed; and, having ascertained that this movement had been executed with success, he put himself at the head of his own division, and fearlessly led his men into the defile. Here, prepared as he was for what was to take place, it was difficult to prevent a temporary panic, when the yell which, to this day, invariably precedes the assault of the mountaineer, burst from the rugged bosom of Ben Cruachan; and the woods which, the moment before, had waved in silence and solitude, gave forth their birth of steel-clad warriors, and, in an instant, became instinct with the dreadful vitality of war. But although appalled and checked for a brief space by the suddenness of the assault, and the masses of rock which the enemy rolled down from the precipices, Bruce, at the head of his division, pressed up the side of the mountain. Whilst this party assaulted the men of Lorn with the utmost fury, Sir James Douglas and his party shouted suddenly upon the heights in their front, showering down their arrows upon them; and, when these missiles were exhausted, attacking them with their swords and battle-axes. The consequence of such an attack, both in front and rear, was the total discomfiture of the army of Lorn; and the circumstances to which this chief had so confidently looked forward, as rendering the destruction of Bruce almost inevitable, were now turned with fatal effect against himself. His great superiority of numbers cumbered and impeded his movements. Thrust, by the double assault and by the peculiar nature of the ground, into such narrow

room as the pass afforded, and driven to fury by finding themselves cut to pieces in detail, without power of resistance, the men of Lorn fled towards Loch Etive, where a bridge thrown over the Awe, and supported upon two immense rocks, known by the name of the Rocks of Brander, formed the solitary communication between the side of the river where the battle took place and the country of Lorn. Their object was to gain the bridge, which was composed entirely of wood, and, having availed themselves of it in their retreat, to destroy it, and thus throw the impassable torrent of the Awe between them and their enemies. But their intention was instantly detected by Douglas, who, rushing down from the high grounds at the head of his archers and light-armed foresters, attacked the body of the mountaineers which had occupied the bridge, and drove them from it with great slaughter, so that Bruce and his division, on coming up, passed it without molestation; and, this last resource being taken from them, the army of Lorn were, in a few hours, literally cut to pieces, whilst their chief, who occupied Loch Etive with his fleet, saw, from his ships, the discomfiture of his men, and found it impossible to give them the least assistance." — TYTLER'S "Life of Bruce."

Note IX. p. 140. — MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.

The following succinct account of this too celebrated event may be sufficient for this place: —

"In the beginning of the year 1692, an action of unexampled barbarity disgraced the government of King William III. in Scotland. In the August preceding, a proclamation had been issued, offering an indemnity to such insurgents as should take the oaths to the King and Queen, on or before the last day of December; and the chiefs of such tribes as had been in arms for James soon after took advantage of the proclamation. But Macdonald of Glencoe was prevented by accident, rather than design, from tendering his submission within the limited time. In the end of December he went to Colonel Hill, who commanded the garrison in Fort William, to take the oaths of allegiance to the government; and the latter having furnished him with a letter to Sir Colin Campbell, Sheriff of the county of Argyle, directed him to repair immediately to Inverary, to make his submission in a legal manner before that magistrate. But the way to Inverary lay through almost impassable mountains, the season was extremely rigorous, and the whole

country was covered with a deep snow. So eager, however, was Macdonald to take the oaths before the limited time should expire, that, though the road lay within half a mile of his own house, he stopped not to visit his family, and, after various obstructions, arrived at Inverary. The time had elapsed, and the sheriff hesitated to receive his submission; but Macdonald prevailed by his importunities, and even tears, in inducing that functionary to administer to him the oath of allegiance, and to certify the cause of his delay. At this time Sir John Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, being in attendance upon William as Secretary of State for Scotland, took advantage of Macdonald's neglecting to take the oath within the time prescribed, and procured from the King a warrant of military execution against that chief and his whole clan. This was done at the instigation of the Earl of Breadalbane, whose lands the Glencoe men had plundered, and whose treachery to government in negotiating with the Highland clans Macdonald himself had exposed. The King was accordingly persuaded that Glencoe was the main obstacle to the pacification of the Highlands; and the fact of the unfortunate chief's submission having been concealed, the sanguinary orders for proceeding to military execution against his clan were in consequence obtained. The warrant was both signed and countersigned by the King's own hand, and the Secretary urged the officers who commanded in the Highlands to execute their orders with the utmost rigour. Campbell of Glenlyon, a captain in Argyll's regiment, and two subalterns, were ordered to repair to Glencoe on the first of February with a hundred and twenty men. Campbell, being uncle to young Macdonald's wife, was received by the father with all manner of friendship and hospitality. The men were lodged at free quarters in the houses of his tenants, and received the kindest entertainment. Till the 13th of the month the troops lived in the utmost harmony and familiarity with the people; and on the very night of the massacre the officers passed the evening at cards in Macdonald's house. In the night Lieutenant Lindsay, with a party of soldiers, called in a friendly manner at his door, and was instantly admitted. Macdonald, while in the act of rising to receive his guest, was shot dead through the back with two bullets. His wife had already dressed; but she was stripped naked by the soldiers, who tore the rings off her fingers with their teeth. The slaughter now became general, and neither age nor infirmity was spared. Some women, in defending their children, were killed; boys, imploring mercy, were shot dead by officers on whose knees they hung. In one place nine persons, as they sat enjoying themselves at table, were butchered by the soldiers. In Inverriggon, Campbell's own quarters, nine men were first bound by the soldiers, and then shot at intervals, one by one.

Nearly forty persons were massacred by the troops; and several who fled to the mountains perished by famine and the inclemency of the season. Those who escaped owed their lives to a tempestuous night. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, who had received the charge of the execution from Dalrymple, was on his march with four hundred men, to guard all the passes from the valley of Glencoe; but he was obliged to stop by the severity of the weather, which proved the safety of the unfortunate clan. Next day he entered the valley, laid the houses in ashes and carried away the cattle and spoil, which were divided among the officers and soldiers." — Article "BRITAIN," "Encyclopædia Britannica." — 6th edition.

Note X. p. 155. — FIDELITY OF THE HIGHLANDERS.

Of the strong, undeviating attachment of the Highlanders to the person, and their deference to the will or commands, of their chiefs and superiors — their rigid adherence to duty and principle — and their chivalrous acts of self-devotion to these in the face of danger and death, there are many instances recorded in General Stewart of Garth's interesting "Sketches of the Highlanders and Highland Regiments," which might not inaptly supply parallels to the deeds of the Romans themselves, at the era when Rome was in her glory. The following instances of such are worthy of being here quoted:

"In the year 1795 a serious disturbance broke out in Glasgow among the Breadalbane Fencibles. Several men having been confined and threatened with corporal punishment, considerable discontent and irritation were excited among their comrades, which increased to such violence, that, when some men were confined in the guard-house, a great proportion of the regiment rushed out and forcibly released the prisoners. This violation of military discipline was not to be passed over, and accordingly measures were immediately taken to secure the ringleaders. But so many were equally concerned, that it was difficult, if not impossible, to fix the crime on any, as being more prominently guilty. And here was shown a trait of character worthy of a better cause, and which originated from a feeling alive to the disgrace of a degrading punishment. The soldiers being made sensible of the nature of their misconduct, and the consequent necessity of public example, *several men voluntarily offered themselves to stand trial*, and suffer the sentence of the law as an atonement for the whole. These men were accordingly marched to Edinburgh Castle, tried, and four condemned to be shot. Three of them were afterwards reprieved, and the fourth, Alexander Sutherland, was shot on Musselburgh Sands.

"The following demi-official account of this unfortunate misunderstanding was published at the time :—

"'During the afternoon of Monday, when a private of the light company of the Breadalbane Fencibles, who had been confined for a *military* offence, was released by that company, and some other companies who had assembled in a tumultuous manner before the guard-house, no person whatever was hurt, and no violence offered; and however unjustifiable the proceedings, it originated not from any disrespect or ill-will to their officers, but from a mistaken point of honour, in a particular set of men in the battalion, who thought themselves disgraced by the impending punishment of one of their number. The men have, in every respect, since that period conducted themselves with the greatest regularity, and strict subordination. The whole of the battalion seemed extremely sensible of the improper conduct of such as were concerned, whatever regret they might feel for the fate of the few individuals who had so readily given themselves up as prisoners, to be tried for their own and others' misconduct.'

"On the march to Edinburgh, a circumstance occurred, the more worthy of notice as it shows a strong principle of honour and fidelity to his word and to his officer in a common Highland soldier. One of the men stated to the officer commanding the party that he knew what his fate would be, but that he had left business of the utmost importance to a friend in Glasgow, which he wished to transact before his death ; that, as to himself, he was fully prepared to meet his fate ; but with regard to his friend, he could not die in peace unless the business was settled, and that, if the officer would suffer him to return to Glasgow, a few hours there would be sufficient, and he would join him before he reached Edinburgh, and march as a prisoner with the party. The soldier added, 'You have known me since I was a child; you know my country and kindred, and you may believe I shall never bring you to any blame by a breach of the promise I now make, to be with you in full time to be delivered up in the Castle.' This was a startling proposal to the officer, who was a judicious, humane man, and knew perfectly his risk and responsibility in yielding to such an extraordinary application. However, his confidence was such that he complied with the request of the prisoner, who returned to Glasgow at night, settled his business, and left the town before daylight to redeem his pledge. He took a long circuit to avoid being seen, apprehended as a deserter, and sent back to Glasgow, as probably his account of his officer's indulgence would not have been credited. In consequence of this caution, and the lengthened march through woods and over hills by an unfrequented route, there was no appearance of him at the hour appointed. The perplexity of the officer when he reached the neighbourhood of

Edinburgh may be easily imagined. He moved forward slowly indeed, but no soldier appeared; and unable to delay any longer, he marched up to the Castle, and as he was delivering over the prisoners, but before any report was given in, Macmartin, the absent soldier, rushed in among his fellow-prisoners, all pale with anxiety and fatigue, and breathless with apprehension of the consequences in which his delay might have involved his benefactor.

"In whatever light the conduct of the officer (my respectable friend, Major Colin Campbell) may be considered, either by military men or others, in this memorable exemplification of the characteristic principle of his countrymen, fidelity to their word, it cannot but be wished that the soldier's magnanimous self-devotion had been taken as an atonement for his own misconduct and that of the whole, who also had made a high sacrifice, in the voluntary offer of their lives for the conduct of their brother soldiers. Are these a people to be treated as malefactors, without regard to their feelings and principles? and might not a discipline, somewhat different from the usual mode, be, with advantage, applied to them?" — Vol. II. pp. 413 - 415, 3rd Edition.

"A soldier of this regiment (the Argyllshire Highlanders) deserted and emigrated to America, where he settled. Several years after his desertion a letter was received from him, with a sum of money, for the purpose of procuring one or two men to supply his place in the regiment, as the only recompense he could make for 'breaking his oath to his God and his allegiance to his King, which preyed on his conscience in such a manner that he had no rest night nor day.'

"This man had had good principles early instilled into his mind, and the disgrace which he had been originally taught to believe would attach to a breach of faith now operated with full effect. The soldier who deserted from the 42nd Regiment at Gibraltar, in 1797, exhibited the same remorse of conscience after he had violated his allegiance. In countries where such principles prevail, and regulate the character of a people, the mass of the population may, on occasions of trial, be reckoned on as sound and trustworthy." — Vol. II. p. 218, 3rd Edition.

"The late James Menzies of Culdares, having engaged in the rebellion of 1715, and been taken at Preston, in Lancashire, was carried to London, where he was tried and condemned, but afterwards reprieved. Grateful for this clemency, he remained at home in 1745, but, retaining a predilection for the old cause, he sent a handsome charger as a present to Prince Charles, when advancing through England. The servant who led and delivered the horse

was taken prisoner, and carried to Carlisle, where he was tried and condemned. To extort a discovery of the person who sent the horse, threats of immediate execution in case of refusal, and offers of pardon on his giving information, were held out ineffectually to the faithful messenger. He knew, he said, what the consequence of a disclosure would be to his master, and his own life was nothing in the comparison; when brought out for execution, he was again pressed to inform on his master. He asked if they were serious in supposing him such a villain. If he did what they desired, and forgot his master and his trust, he could not return to his native country, for Glenlyon would be no home or country for him, as he would be despised and hunted out of the Glen. Accordingly he kept steady to his trust, and was executed. This trusty servant's name was John Macnaughton, from Glenlyon, in Perthshire; he deserves to be mentioned, both on account of his incorruptible fidelity, and of his testimony to the honourable principles of the people, and to their detestation of a breach of trust to a kind and honourable master, however great might be the risk, or however fatal the consequences, to the individual himself." — Vol. I. pp. 52, 53, 3rd Edition.

Note XI. p. 241. — Robert Donn's Poems.

I cannot dismiss this story without resting attention for a moment on the light which has been thrown on the character of the Highland Drover since the time of its first appearance, by the account of a drover poet, by name Robert Mackay, or, as he was commonly called, Rob Donn, *i. e.* brown Robert, and certain specimens of his talents, published in the 90th Number of the Quarterly Review. The picture which that paper gives of the habits and feelings of a class of persons with which the general reader would be apt to associate no ideas but those of wild superstition and rude manners, is in the highest degree interesting; and I cannot resist the temptation of quoting two of the songs of this hitherto unheard of poet of humble life. They are thus introduced by the reviewer: —

"Upon one occasion, it seems, Rob's attendance upon his master's cattle business detained him a whole year from home, and at his return he found that a fair maiden, to whom his troth had been plighted of yore, had lost sight of her vows, and was on the eve of being married to a rival (a carpenter by trade), who had profited by the young Drover's absence. The following song was composed during a sleepless night, in the neighbourhood of Crieff a

Perthshire, and the home-sickness which it expresses appears to be almost as much that of the deer-hunter as of the loving swain.

Easy is my bed, it is easy,
But it is not to sleep that I incline;
The wind whistles northwards, northwards,
And my thoughts move with it.
More pleasant were it to be with thee
In the little glen of calves,
Than to be counting of droves
In the enclosures of Crieff.
Easy is my bed, &c.

Great is my esteem of the maiden,
Towards whose dwelling the north wind blows;
She is ever cheerful, sportive, kindly,
Without folly, without vanity, without pride.
True is her heart — were I under hiding,
And fifty men in pursuit of my footsteps,
I should find protection, when they surrounded me most closely,
In the secret recess of that shieling.
Easy is my bed, &c.

Oh for the day for turning my face homeward,
That I may see the maiden of beauty: —
Joyful will it be to me to be with thee, —
Fair girl with the long heavy locks!
Choice of all places for deer-hunting
Are the brindled rock and the ridge!
How sweet at evening to be dragging the slain deer
Downwards along the piper's cairn!
Easy is my bed, &c.

Great is my esteem for the maiden
Who parted from me by the west side of the enclosed field;
Late yet again will she linger in that fold,
Long after the kine are assembled.
It is I myself who have taken no dislike to thee,
Though far away from thee am I now.
It is for the thought of thee that sleep flies from me;
Great is the profit to me of thy parting kiss!
Easy is my bed, &c.

Dear to me are the boundaries of the forest;
Far from Crieff is my heart;
My remembrance is of the hillocks of sheep,
And the heath of many knolls.

Oh for the red-streaked fissures of the rock,
Where in spring time the fawns leap ;
Oh for the crags towards which the wind is blowing —
Cheap would be my bed to be there !
Easy is my bed, &c.

"The following describes Rob's feelings on the first discovery of his damsel's infidelity. The airs of both these pieces are his own, and, the Highland ladies say, very beautiful.

Heavy to me is the shieling, and the hum that is in it,
Since the ear that was wont to listen is now no more on the watch.
Where is Isabel, the courteous, the conversable, a sister in kindness ?
Where is Anne, the slender-browed, the turret-breasted, whose glossy hair pleased me when yet a boy ?
Heich ! what an hour was my returning !
Pain such as that sunset brought, what availeth me to tell it ?

I traversed the fold, and upward among the trees —
Each place, far and near, wherein I was wont to salute my love.
When I looked down from the crag, and beheld the fair-haired stranger dallying with his bride,
I wished that I had never revisited the glen of my dreams.
Such things came into my heart as that sun was going down,
A pain of which I shall never be rid, what availeth me to tell it ?

Since it hath been heard that the carpenter had persuaded thee,
My sleep is disturbed — busy is foolishness within me at midnight.
The kindness that has been between us, — I cannot shake off that memory in visions ;
Thou callest me not to thy side ; but love is to me for a messenger.
There is strife within me, and I toss to be at liberty ;
And ever the closer it clings, and the delusion is growing to me as a tree.

Anne, yellow-haired daughter of Donald, surely thou knowest not how it is with me —
That it is old love, unrepaid, which has worn down from me my strength ;
That when far from thee, beyond many mountains, the wound in my heart was throbbing,
Stirring, and searching for ever, as when I sat beside thee on the turf.
Now, then, hear me this once, if for ever I am to be without thee,
My spirit is broken — give me one kiss ere I leave this land !

Haughtily and scornfully the maid looked upon me ;
Never will it be work for thy fingers to unloose the band from my curls;

Thou hast been absent a twelvemonth, and six were seeking me diligently ;
Was thy superiority so high, that there should be no end of abiding for thee ?
Ha ! ha ! ha ! — hast thou at last become sick ?
Is it love that is to give death to thee ? surely the enemy has been in no haste.

But how shall I hate thee, even though towards me thou hast become cold ?
When my discourse is most angry concerning thy name in thine absence,
Of a sudden thine image, with its old dearness, comes visibly into my mind ;
And a secret voice whispers that love will yet prevail!
And I become surety for it anew, darling,
And it springs up at that hour lofty as a tower.

" Rude and bald as these things appear in a verbal translation, and rough as they might possibly appear, even were the originals intelligible, we confess we are disposed to think they would of themselves justify Dr. Mackay (their Editor) in placing this herdsman-lover among the true sons of song." — *Quarterly Review*, No. XC., July 1831.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

(*a*) p. xix. Sale of Waverley Manuscripts. Scott gave to Constable such manuscripts as he possessed in 1823, and they were demanded back on Constable's bankruptcy, as a condition of the gift had been silence as to the authorship. This was now inevitably revealed. By the award of Lord Newton they remained in Constable's possession. Thirteen manuscripts, of which six were imperfect, were sold in London for £317. ("Archibald Constable," iii. 443.) Scott refused to purchase back what he regarded as his own property.

(*b*) p. xxiv. "Invernahyle." This laird was a client of the elder Mr. Scott's. Walter, when about fifteen, made Invernahyle's acquaintance, and visited him in the Highlands. The earlier chapters of Lockhart contain many anecdotes of this old loyalist, who inspired part of "Waverley."

(*c*) p. xxvi. "William Erskine." The exact proportion of Erskine's work, and of Scott's own, in the famous "Quarterly" review of "Old Mortality" can scarcely now be estimated. It is improbable that Scott wrote any of the literary criticism of himself, except, perhaps, passages of disparagement. (Lockhart, v. 174, note.) His object was to vindicate his historical view of the Covenanters, and to throw dust as to his authorship of the novels in the eyes of Murray.

(*d*) p. 14. Death of Croftangry's Lawyer. This scene was suggested by the final illness of Scott's father. Lockhart sadly adds that it was a prophecy of Sir Walter's own last days.

(*e*) p. 107. "Upon things which are long enough a-gone." Scott "recovered," probably composed, verses for this tune, which are printed by Lockhart (vii. 197).

(*f*) p. 246. Death of Mrs. Margaret Swinton. This lady's maid went mad, and slew her mistress with a coal-axe, when Scott was aged about eleven or twelve (Lockhart, i. 142). At the time of her death she was residing near George's Square, the home of Scott's father. The real heroine of the Mirror was Lady Primrose, sister of Scott's great-grandmother, who accompanied her to the house of the Wizard.

(*g*) p. 308. "The tapestry hangings." In the "Blackwood" version (1818, p. 705) it is doubted whether the room was hung with tapestry. General Browne is called "Colonel D." The scene is in the north, not the west, of England. In "Blackwood" the hero cannot close the door of his room. The date in "Blackwood" is 1737, much earlier than Scott places it, "about the end of the American War." It is plain that Scott had information about place and person which he did not give. In a similar but more awful modern tale (told at first hand) two persons see the apparition. One of them does not survive the shock.

(*h*) p. 341. "The Bridal of Caolchairn." Scott quotes a book of poems published, in 1822, by John Hay Allan. This gentleman, with his brother Charles, about 1840–49 adopted the name of Stuart, and published "Tales of the Century," which is a disguised version of what they conceived to be their real story. They were, in the eyes of the world, sons of a son of Admiral Carter Allen, who had some claim, which the Editor has never been able to clear up, to the Earldom of Errol (Hay). The Admiral had two sons: the younger, Thomas, was father of John Carter Allen, or John Hay Allan, or John Sobieski Stuart, and of Charles Allen, or Hay Allan, or Charles Edward Stuart. Scott's opinion of the brothers is noted in his Journal (ii. 296, 299 note). They had not yet (1829) assumed or resumed the name of Stuart. Their theory was that their father, Thomas Allen, was not the son of the Admiral, but of Charles Edward Stuart (Charles III., Prince Charles) and of Louisa of Stolberg, his wife, that the child's birth was kept secret, and that the Admiral was only his foster-father. The difficulties inherent in this hypothesis need not be dwelt upon. The brothers bore a strong personal resemblance to the Stuarts, and were accomplished Gaelic scholars, and romantically interesting antiquaries. Their best-known works, perhaps, are "The Costume of the Clans," "Tales of the Century," "Lays of the Deer Forest," full of poems on their family legend, and of woodland lore and Highland tradition. In parts of the Highlands they were welcomed as Kings of the Gael, and their tombstone maintains the correctness of their pedigree. Their singular career and remarkable personalities make a strange conclusion to the romance of the Stuarts.

ANDREW LANG.

July 1894.

GLOSSARY.

A', all.
" A' ae," all one.
Aboon, above.
Ae, one.
Afore, before.
Affrayitly, affrightedly.
Ain, own.
Ainsell, ownself.
Alane, alone.
An, if.
Ane, one.
Anent, concerning.
Auld, old.
Auld-world, ancient, old-fashioned.
Awalkinnit, awakened.
Awmous, alms.

Bairn, a child.
Baith, both.
Barns-breaking, a mischievous or injurious action; larking, an idle frolic.
Bent, moor, marsh.
Bestiall, cattle.
Bickering, tremulous, crackling, spluttering.
Bide, to stay, to remain; to endure.
" Bide a blink," stay a moment.
Bien, frugal, comfortable.
Big, to build.
Bigging, a building.
Bink, a bench, a plate wall-rack.
Birling, a boat with six or eight oars, used on the West Coast of Scotland.
Bittock, a little piece, a short distance.
" Blear a plain man's eye," to blind him by flattery.
Blink, a moment, a brief space of time.
Bodach, a spirit or spectre.
Bodle, a small copper coin.
Bothy, a wooden hut.
Brae, a hill.
Brockit, white-faced.
Bugillis, bugles.
Busk, to dress up.

Ca', call.
Callant, a lad.
Cantrip, a spell, a charm; a trick.
Carline, an old woman.
Carried, — applied to a person whose mind is in so abstracted a state that he cannot attend to what is said to him, or to the business he is himself engaged in.
Carritch, the catechism.
Carse, low alluvial land.
Castor, a beaver hat.
Cateran, a Highland robber.
" Cauld kail het again " — lit., broth warmed and served up the second day; a repetition.
Chap, a customer, a buyer.
Chappit, struck.
Chield, a fellow.
Clachan, a Highland hamlet.
Coronach, a lament for the dead.
Crack, gossip.
Creagh, a foray, a cattle-lifting raid.
Croce, a cross.
Curch, a kerchief for covering the head.

Daddles, hands.
Dang, knocked down, struck violently.
" Deas, chamber of," chamber of state.

Deasil, motion according to the course of the sun.
Doch-an-dorrach, the parting cup.
Doddy, without horns.
Dour, hard, obstinate, sulky.
Dunnie-wassel, a Highland gentleman.

Eld, elder, old man.
Erar, rather, sooner.
Evanist, vanished.
Evened, compared, lowered.

Fash, trouble.
Fause, false.
Feared, afraid.
Fee, wage.
Fey, predestined to death, doomed.
Fleech, to flatter.
Forbears, ancestors.
Frae, from.
Frampal, unruly.
Freats, superstitious notions; fret, worry, annoyance.
Fule, a fool.

Gaber, to vie in telling marvel-
Gaed, went. [lous stories.
Gainstander, one who withstands.
Ganging, going.
Gar, to make, to oblige.
Gart, compelled.
Gate, way, direction, manner.
Gauger, an exciseman.
Gear, property, money.
Gillie, a Highland servant.
Gillie-whitefoot, a worthless fellow; also, a messenger.
Gin, if.
Glunamie, a rough Highland boor.
Grumph, grunt.
Gude, good.
Gyrecarlin, a witch.

Hae, have.
Haggis, a Scotch pudding of minced meats.
Hogged, with the hair clipped short.
Hollan, holly.
Hooly, cautiously, softly.

Ilk, each.
Ilk, of the same name.
Infare, infair, a wedding recep-
Ingle-side, fireside. [tion.

Kail, broth.
Kain, a tax payable to the landlord in kind.
Ken, to know.
Kenning, a slight degree.
"**Kest abak**," cast behind.
Kyloes, Highland cattle.

Lawing, an inn reckoning.
Leabhar-dhu, a black pocket-book.
Lesouris, grazing grounds.
Levand, living.
Lihu, a calf.
Loon, a rogue.
Looten, permitted, let.

Mair, more.
Makand, making.
Marcat, market.
Maun, must.
Messis, mass.
Mind, to remember.
Monotroch, a one-wheeled car or vehicle.
"**Morn's morning, the**," tomorrow morning.
Mony, many.
Muckle, much.
Muhme, aunt.
Murrey-coloured, mulberry or dark red.

Na, nae, no, not.

"**Or molu**," a variety of brass or gilded bronze.
Ouir, over.
Ower, over.
Owsen, oxen.

"**Pe gang**," still go on.
Pibroch, a Highland air on the bagpipe.

Pick-thank, a parasite, a low fellow.
Prôné, extolled, cried up.
Propale, to publish, to disclose.
Puir, poor.

Quaigh, a small drinking-cup.
Quean, a hussy.
Quha, who.
Quhare, where.
Quhat, what.
Quhen, when.
Quhilk, which.
Quod, quoth, said.

Rachis, dogs.
Raff, a worthless person.
Rated, scolded.
Ratten, a rat.
Reiving, pillaging.
Renzeis, reins.
Riff-raff, rabble.
Rigging-tree, the principal beam in the house-roof.
Rinnand, running.
Rudas, rough, rude.
"**Rudas quean**," a haggard old woman.
"**Rugging and riving**," tugging and tearing — *i. e.*, the wild doings of Border life.
Runt, an old cow.

Sair, sore.
Samin, same.
Sassenach, Southerner.
Schaw, show.
Schew, showed.
Shieling, a hut.
Sic, such.
Siller, money.
Skaithis, bad results.
Sneeshing, snuff.
Spaewife, a fortune-teller.
Sprack, spritely.
Stot, a bullock between two and three years old.
Tacksman, an under tenant.
Taishataragh, the gift of second-sight.
Teedling, humming.
Thae, these, those.
"**Thrum bonnet**," a bonnet with fringes and similar adornments.
Till 't, to it.
Tindis, horns.
"**Tip him the nailer**," give him the finishing blow.
Toddis, foxes.
Topsman, head drover.
Toustie, testy, irascible.
"**Traist servandis**," trusty servants.
Trew, to trow, to think.
Twa, two.
Tyned, lost.

Untented, not watched over.

Vaward, the van, front or early part.

Wad, would.
Wae, woe.
"**Waes me**," woe is me.
Waits, hautboys, oboes.
Walth, wealth, plenty.
Wanchancy, unlucky, dangerous.
Ware, to expend.
Warlock, a wizard.
Wean, an infant or little child.
Wheen, a few. "**Wheen mair**," a few more.
Whilk, which.
Wi', with.
Wight, a person.
Winna, will not.
Wot, know.
Writhen, distorted.
Wunna, will not.

Yaud, a mare.

THE END.

ADDENDA

TO

EDITOR'S NOTES AND INTRODUCTION.

A few points of historical or legendary interest have been noted by the Editor in revising his work. These are printed in this Appendix.

July 1894.

ADDENDA.

WAVERLEY.

Vol. II. page 384.—*Anecdote of Prince Charles at Culloden.*

In the Editor's Notes to "The Monastery," it is pointed out that this anecdote is given in Bishop Forbes's MS. "Lyon in Mourning," but not on the authority of Sir Stuart Threipland of Fingask.

Page 386.—"*Tom Erskine was positively mad.*"

Lord Erskine (according to Lady Morgan), told her that he "saw the ghost of his father's servant," who came on a matter of business, about a debt owed to him. Lady Morgan said, "Either Lord Erskine did or did not believe this story; if he did, what a strange aberration of intellect; if he did not, what a strange aberration from truth. My opinion is that he *did* believe it."

The anecdote is quoted by Mr. Dale Owen in his "Debatable Land," and by Mr. Proctor in "Chance and Luck" (page 220). "I express no opinion," says Mr. Proctor; namely, as to the sanity and truthfulness of the seer, and the character of the apparition.

GUY MANNERING.

Vol. I. page xi.—*Mr. Train.*

Some very interesting unpublished traditions, amassed for Scott by Mr. Train, are extant in a MS. collection, "Miscellanea Curiosa," at Abbotsford, where also are preserved some Jacobite *triolets* and other pasquils.

Page xiii.—*Sources of "Guy Mannering."*

When Lockhart was revising the "Life of Scott," a correspondent suggested to him that the celebrated Annesley case was the foundation of "Guy Mannering." A pamphlet on the subject was published later, with many supposed parallels between the novel and the legal affair. In Mr. Paget's "Paradoxes and Puzzles," the Annesley tale of "The Wandering Heir" is discussed. Probably the real source of the romance is that stated by Scott.

THE ANTIQUARY.

Vol. I. chap. iii.—"*Clavigeri, or Club-Bearers.*"

The multitude were thus armed, when "boden in effeir of war," as late as 1430, according to Georges Chastellain, the Burgundian historian. He avers that in the fatal sally of Jeanne d'Arc from Compiègne (May 23, 1430), she led with her, by dint of her prophecies, "all that could carry clubs." The statement, however, has been disputed, and the Burgundian versions of the event are neither impartial nor accurate.

Vol. I. chap. iv.—"*Caius Caligula Pharum Fecit.*"

This interpretation of C.C.P.F. is assigned in the "Siglaria" to Gori. It was, no doubt, prompted by the statement of Suetonius (Caligula, 46) that Caligula built a *pharos* on the German Ocean.

As to the famous puzzle of Ælia Lælia, the main authority is C. C. Malvasia: *Ælia Lælia Crispis, non nata resurgens.* 4to. Bononiæ, 1683.

ROB ROY.

In 1817 Constable sent to Scott a copy of a letter from Burns to Mr. Tytler of Woodhouselea, containing a copy of a ballad, "Rob Roy from the Highlands came." It deals with an abduction of a girl, perpetrated by a son of Rob's. "I once," says

Burns, "had a great many of these fragments, and some of them were entire, but as I had no idea then that anybody cared for them, I have forgot them. I invariably hold it sacrilege to add anything of my own to help out these venerable old compositions." The letter is dated "from the Lawnmarket, Monday, Nov. 1790." Scott had also a Gaelic ballad, of no great merit, on the abduction.

Author's Introduction.

James Mohr Macgregor or Drummond.

This son of Rob Roy's is well known for a plausible scoundrel to readers of Mr. R. L. Stevenson's "Catriona." Scott here mentions that Lord Holdernesse, according to James Mohr, offered him "a situation in the Government's service." He declined it, he adds, "as a disgrace to his birth."

The Editor greatly regrets that he must correct Mr. Macgregor or Drummond. He accepted the post of spy to the Hanoverian Government. The proof is in the Additional MSS. in the British Museum (Add. 33,050, f. 369): James Macgregor's information corroborates that contained in the tract known as "Henry Goring's Letter" (1750). By aid of this spy, and another spoken of as "Pickle," in reality the chief of one of the most famous Jacobite clans, Dr. Archibald Cameron, was betrayed to his doom.

OLD MORTALITY.

Vol. I. page 309.—"*Aird's Moss,*" *or* "*Air's Moss.*"

The author of "Memoirs of the Lord Viscount Dundee," an "Officer of the Army," avers that the Covenanters at Aird's Moss numbered "about three hundred men banditti," who were dispersed by eighty horse under Bruce of Earl's Hall. He states the loss of the troopers at seventeen men. This writer regards the Grahame slain at Drumclog as a kinsman of Dundee's, which is matter of doubt.

Page 311.

"Sharpe" is more usually and correctly written "Sharp," but Scott prefers to spell it with the final "e."

Vol. II. page 315.—*Hackston.*

This hero's family name was really Halkerstoun. Rathillet, his family estate, till quite recently belonged to his descendants, or rather collaterals, on the distaff side.

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.

Vol. I. page xi.—*Dainty Davie.*

In a curious collection of scurrilous Jacobite ditties preserved by Scott in several MS. volumes styled "Miscellanea Curiosa," there is a triolet on Mr. Williamson, and a satire on his death, which is attributed to his seventh wife. Charles II. is said to have applauded his prowess at Cherry-trees, which the monarch confessed that he could not have emulated in the Royal Oak.

Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe paid a visit to a spinster descended from Dainty Davie, and the owner of that patriarch's portrait.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

Vol. I. page xxv.

There exists a possible reference to the death of Stair's daughter, the original of the Bride, in a letter of Dr. Hickes's to Pepys, printed, with other correspondence, in appendices to recent editions of Pepys' Diary. Hickes had been Lauderdale's chaplain, and, in later years, was consulted by Pepys on the question of second sight and other popular beliefs. He tells Pepys that Lauderdale repeated to him a strange tale of some melancholy and abnormal event in Stair's family. Stair entered the room as Lauderdale was talking, and, on his request, told his own tale, with obvious emotion. This may have been the true version of the Bride's tragedy. But Covenanting writers credit another daughter of Stair's with being possessed, and with the power of flying across a room, or even across a garden. Such things, as in the noted case of the daughter of Shan of Bargarren, in 1697, were attributed to witchcraft. Possibly Stair may not have been free from this superstition, and *these* may have

been the occurrences about which he spoke to Hickes. Unluckily Dr. Hickes, distrusting his memory of the details, does not give the narrative to Pepys. Wodrow mentions, in his "Analecta," a dim and brief traditional version received through his wife. It is only certain that the Bride, after her marriage at her father's house of Carsecreugh, on Aug. 12, 1669, remained there till Aug. 24, when she was taken to Baldoon, where a masque was acted for her entertainment. She died on Sept. 12, and was buried on Sept. 30. Baldoon died in 1682, his rival, Lord Rutherford, in 1685: he held a commission in the Household Guards ("Annals of the Viscount and First and Second Earls of Stairs," i. 47, 48).